Design and the Formation of Taste in the British Printed Calico Industry, 1919 to 1940

Volume II

Emily Anne Baharini Baines

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5. Response to Economic Crisis

5.1 Introduction

The evident crisis in the cotton industry in the inter-war period (see Chapter 4) sparked a series of government investigations and a range of industrial and Governmental proposals to redeem the economic condition of industry. This chapter will examine the structural analysis and economic interventions of government, with the implications for design of these interventions. The establishment of a protected dye industry, and the controversy in the industry over the economic costs of the policy, is considered. It will also analyse the Government policy of raising the artistic standard of British design, to obviate the perceived competitive disadvantage of British products. To achieve this aim, a concerted attempt was made to construct the taste of the public, manufacturers, designers and retailers by 'the staging of exhibitions and other forms of educative propaganda' and by modifying the education and improving the professional status of designers (Chapter 3).

Consideration of the response to the economic decline of exports by cotton industry organisations is given in the context of historiographic debate on the structural causes of decline in British industry. An analysis of British decline advanced by Lazonick (taking the cotton industry as a case study), attributes it to an entrepreneurial weakness of manufacturers, particularly a failure to create large vertically combined corporations. This view is supported by Garside: he states that the response of the spinning and manufacturing sections to the depression was wage reduction and greater efficiency (requiring weavers to operate greater numbers of looms and work longer hours), rather than schemes of industrial reorganisation, amalgamation and standardisation recommended by the cotton unions. However, Feinstein comments that 'the evidence does not immediately suggest' that integrated spinning and weaving firms were more successful than specialised firms, and points out that research by Dintenfass and Supple on the British coal industry in the interwar period did not support the

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hypothesis that creating large-scale corporations would be advantageous.\(^6\) The process of negotiation of voluntary and national rationalisation schemes in the textile finishing industry and proposals of vertical combinations in the finishing and distribution sectors are discussed, with examples of vertical combination in works established overseas. The role of cotton industry organisations was highlighted by M Dupree, who indicated the active investigation of Japanese vertical structures by Manchester Chamber of Commerce and the attempt to alter market constraints by international negotiation, tariff protection and co-ordination of distribution for particular markets.\(^7\) Initiatives of the printed textile industry in response to economic conditions, such as instituting price agreements and selective export market schemes and campaigning for restrictive import tariffs, will be examined.

In the third section of the chapter, strategic and tactical responses by companies are analysed. These strategies include diversification, product improvement, price reduction, rationalisation of plant, cost reduction, new distribution structures and marketing approaches. Measures intended to reduce the price of the product impacted on design, in the minimisation of dye and copper rollers and choice of print process. Analysis will focus on product development strategies, in the investment in research and approach to design innovation by the case study companies. The degree of entrepreneurialism in the strategic policies of these case studies can be considered and the advantage of vertical combination (and its relation to the degree of entrepreneurialism of the company) assessed. A successful entrepreneur is defined by Feinstein and Lazonick as someone who could make changes in the existing framework of markets and productive techniques, by finding new goods to make, or new ways to produce or sell the product, or new structures for the firm or industry.\(^8\)

Comparison of the case studies will be made, to clarify whether a common approach was taken by the different sectors of the industry to investment, research, design policy, marketing and distribution. The contrasting theories of Pevsner (the proposition that severe economic

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circumstances inspire a more risk-taking approach to design\(^9\) and Knight (his hypothesis that in distress conditions internal organisational change and cost-reduction projects will be emphasised, since the company will not be able to afford the high risk and cost of introducing a new product or process\(^{10}\)) can then be considered. The relation of support for Modernist design and investment in research, as part of a broader strategy of the ‘use of innovation to drive business success’,\(^{11}\) is considered. The analysis of design in Chapter 6 will substantiate the examination of design investment (discussed in Section 5.4.3) with an assessment of degree of risk-taking in company design. This relates to the assumption by Government that risk-taking, high quality (equated to Modernist) design, was required to establish a national position as a creator of fashion, which was seen as a competitive necessity in the design industries.\(^{12}\)

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12 See Department of Overseas Trade quotes, given in the Section 1.1.6.
5.2 Government

5.2.1 Analysis of the Textile Industry by Government

Consideration of the textile industry and related issues was undertaken primarily by the Board of Trade, but also by the Board of Education and various inter-departmental committees. Design aspects are considered in the Section 5.2.6. Inquiries relating to designers and design education are considered in Chapter 3. Other aspects of design in the textile industry covered include a Committee of Design on the Scottish Woollen Industry, chaired by Sir Steven Bilsden.\(^\text{13}\)

Economic and structural analysis was undertaken by a series of Board of Trade committees. A report was produced by a Departmental Committee on the ‘Position of the Textile Trade after the War’ in 1918.\(^\text{14}\) The Committee on Industry and Trade was established in July 1924 and chaired by Sir Arthur Balfour KBE. It considered imports, exports, costs and prices and produced the *Survey of Textile Industries*.\(^\text{15}\) A Committee of Civil Research Sub-Committee on the Cotton Industry collected data on national competition, particularly the industry in Japan, India, Europe, China, Brazil and the USA, between 1925 and 1930.\(^\text{16}\) The Economic Advisory Council Committee on the Cotton Industry held an Enquiry on the state of the industry and possible solutions to the problems in 1929-30.\(^\text{17}\) Evidence was heard from the Bleaching Trade Advisory Board, the Federation of Calico Printers, the Calico Printers’ Association, the Joint Committee of Cotton Trade Organisations, and the Shipping Merchants’ Committee of the Manchester Chamber of Commerce, as well as spinners and weavers organisations, workers organisations, banks, and other relevant organisations.\(^\text{18}\) Responses to it were considered at the Joint Conference of the Associations, on 28th October 1929. Relevant evidence and conclusions drawn in these investigations were called on in Chapter 2 and 3, while the proposed solutions to the crisis by these committees are given in Section 5.2.2. Further analysis continued in the Policy Committee, with a series on


\(^{14}\) *Design and the Cotton Industry*, Appendix, p44.

\(^{15}\) PRO BT 55/2, 122-125: Evidence (1924-7) and Final Report.

\(^{16}\) PRO BT 55/5, 6 and 7.

\(^{17}\) Evidence and Report in the Public Record Office, BT 55/18.

\(^{18}\) The Cotton Spinners’ and Manufacturers’ Association, the Federation of Master Cotton Spinners’ Association, The Amalgamated Society of Dyers, Bleachers, Finishers and Kindred Trades, The United Textile Factory Workers’ Association, the Master Packers’ Association, the Lancashire Cotton Corporation Ltd.
memoranda and minutes by Sir Philip Cunliffe-Lister, covering the cotton industry, the silk and art silk industry, combination in industry, the economic situation and a survey of other industries. The Provisional Emergency Cotton Committee, sitting from September 1922 to August 1924, was an investigation concentrating on the cotton spinning and weaving industry. The dyestuffs industry was considered and controlled by a number of committees: the Dyestuffs Industry Development Committee (1920-5), the Dyestuffs Advisory Licensing Committee and the Trade and Industry Committee.

5.2.2 Structural Recommendations

The 1924-7 Balfour Committee on Industry and Trade analysed the state of the cotton industry and discussed questions such as reductions in finishing prices, specific costs and the employment of designers but did not make a series of recommendations.

The 1929 Inquiry by the Sub-Committee on the Cotton Industry for the Committee of Civil Research was established to investigate improved methods of marketing, vertical coordination of the industry and a reduction in costs of production. Its approach was to refer particular problems to industry bodies for resolution or investigation. The recommendations (relevant to finishers) were: that other sections of the trade should be able to negotiate with each section of the finishing industries as a separate entity; that flexibility in finishers’ prices should be discussed between merchants and finishers, possibly on the lines of a ‘special case’ scheme with a brand or mark; and that a series of meetings between finishers and merchants should discuss cheaper ways of producing the same finish. It also recommended that problems arising from the lack of flexibility in distribution be studied by a Committee of merchants at the Manchester Chamber of Commerce and that the Cotton Trade Statistical Bureau should study the price margins of Japanese, Italian or local competitors in our chief markets.

19 PRO BT 55/49.
21 PRO BT 55/16, 17 and 42.
22 PRO BT 55/5, C.R. (C.I.) 3: Introductory memorandum by the Chairman, p1.
The Cotton Industry Enquiry by the Economic Advisory Council Committee in 1929-30 also recommended flexibility in finishing pricing, particularly for long runs.\(^\text{24}\) This would be enabled by better organisation of the merchants, as part of a series of amalgamations into larger units by merchants, spinners and manufacturers. This would enable them to form a definite production policy and enter into arrangements with each other and the finishing organisations. The industry was urged to co-operate under the JCCTO in production and marketing of standard lines, reduction of costs of production and increases in efficiency. Possible vertical integration, rather than co-operation schemes, were also discussed (see Section 5.3.4).

5.2.3 Protection

Free trade assumptions, based on the ‘Manchester School’ of classical economists\(^\text{25}\) were central to the political ideology of the textile industry and common across the political consensus in the 19\(^{\text{th}}\) and early 20\(^{\text{th}}\) Century, although a Fair Trade League was formed in 1881. A campaign for Protection and Imperial Preference by Joseph Chamberlain in 1903-6 was met by hostility from Liberal, Labour and other Conservatives. The Tariff Reform campaign of Joseph Chamberlain was fully supported by Frank Warner as a representative of the silk industry, who gave evidence to the Tariff Commission in 1904.

During the First World War and the immediate post-war period, the Government intervened in market conditions with a range of protective tariffs for the home market and intergovernmental agreements to improve exports. In 1915, McKenna duties were placed on imported luxury items. These duties were continued, with the addition of imperial preference in 1919, import licensing of dyes in 1920 and the Safeguarding of Industries Act in 1921. Duties on silk and art silk were imposed on 1st July 1925, with a Drawback deductible for exports: exporters had to enter into a bond as security for the exportation in order to claim the drawback.\(^\text{26}\) Protection was opposed by the Labour opposition: formalisation of a unanimous

\(^{24}\) PRO BT 55/18, Final Report, pp15, 24-8.
\(^{26}\) MT75/ 1922-28/ 113, 30/6/25. This import duty had a severe effect on the Swiss silk industry, since Britain was their largest export market. There was a fall in their total exports, from an average of 10.3 million francs per month in the first quarter of 1925 to 5.6 million francs average in the last quarter, after the duty came in.
anti-tariff position by the executive committee of the Labour Party and the parliamentary committee of the TUC occurred in 1921, in a manifesto responding to the Safeguarding of Industries Bill.27

This policy of fairly small scale and very selective protection measures was replaced by an acceptance of the need for comprehensive import tariffs in 1931, as the severity of the trade depression became evident and the use of tariffs by other countries became widespread. Trading relations with France, Germany, Italy, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Spain had been increasingly biased by tariff increases during the 1920s. Political support for protection had intensified sufficiently for a call to be issued at the September 1928 Conservative party conference for the widest possible extension of safeguarding.28 The international tariff situation was exacerbated in 1930 by the imposition of Smoot-Hawley import duty rates in the United States, which drew widespread international tariff retaliation in Japan, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, South America and Europe.29 Opinion within the TUC, the Labour Party and City Banks had shifted by 1930, with the promotion of inter-Empire trade protection and home market tariffs as urgent measures which were supported as a pragmatic choice of expediency against isolationism.30 However, a report to the Economic Advisory Council by the Committee of Economists advocating import taxes, also in October 1930, was rejected by the Labour Government. Mounting pressure from the Conservative opposition was demonstrated by a Commons motion in favour of widespread tariff reform, supported by all but six backbenchers.31 A split in the Cabinet on the issue, with free trade defended by the Chancellor, Snowden, caused the resignation of the Government on 24 August 1931. A National Government led by MacDonald was formed, but devaluation occurred before any agreement on protection could be reached. The Conservative-dominated National Government returned in the subsequent October election passed an Abnormal Importation (Customs Duties) Act in November, while detailed tariff recommendations were prepared by the Conservative Research Department. This resulted in a 50% tariff on cotton, jute, wool and linen goods between November 1931 and July 1932, subsequently reduced in

28 Ibid., p52.
30 Garside, W.R. op. cit., p56.
the Import Duties Act to a 20% general tariff for imported textiles with 33.3% for some luxury goods (including printed calico). Mary Schoeser states that imported designs were also taxed from 1931, encouraging manufacturers to find indigenous designers. No evidence from other sources has been found to support this statement. If correct, a significant increase in dress fabric designs sourced from Britain, to displace Parisian designs, would be expected (see Chapter 3). Mutual tariff concessions were negotiated with a series of countries, with bilateral treaties agreed with Argentina, Denmark and other Scandinavian counties.

Pressure to adjust the import restrictions or duties of colonies in favour of British calico exports became very strong in the 1930s. A conference in October 1930 agreed a moderate system of imperial preference for textiles. The protective approach was considered in the Indian budgetary crisis of 1930 (when cotton import tariffs were raised to 15% from 11%, in line with other tariffs): an additional 5% preference duty on non-British imports of plain grey cotton piece goods was proposed by the Viceroy and passed by the Legislative Assembly in March, to reduce Japanese competition in this area. However, it resulted in an intensification of the boycott movement, and the following year further deficits required additional customs duties including a 5% surcharge on cotton piece goods (Section 4.4.1.2.1). The Ottawa Conference in 1932 extended the Imperial Preference system with the raising of tariffs to non-British countries among Dominion countries. Under pressure from the CPA, a tariff quota agreement in Egypt (as a Dominion country) was introduced in 1936, allowing trade to recover. In addition to the Dominion agreements, a series of bilateral trade agreements were concluded with European and South American countries (and Australia) between 1933 and

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32 The Import Duties Bill was announced in February 1932, instituting a 10% ad valorem import tariff on all articles not specifically exempt (such as food). The Import Duties Advisory Committee raised the general rate to 20%, with 33.3% for a range of industrial and luxury goods (including printed calico).
34 Chatterji, B. Trade, Tariffs and Empire: Lancashire and British Policy in India, 1919-1939, Oxford University Press, 1992, p339.
1935.\textsuperscript{38} Pressure on the Government, from the Manchester Chamber of Commerce, to respond to the severe contraction of African export markets due to Japanese price competition led the Board of Trade to suspend 'most favoured nation' status for Japan in May 1933 (agreed in the Anglo-Japanese Commercial Treaty) in the markets of Nigeria, Gold Coast, Gambia and Sierra Leone. After lengthy and inconclusive negotiations with representatives of the Japanese textile industry, quota restrictions against imports of Japanese textiles into Britain and colonial markets were imposed in 1934.\textsuperscript{39} Discussions with India resulted in textile tariff reductions in 1936, but printed textiles were not included in these reductions.

Overall, the effect of textile import tariffs was to sharply restrict the import of printed textiles (Section 4.4.3), reducing the stiff competition for very cheap fabrics as well as the quality market. E.W. Goodale stated that the result of the tariff on the furnishing fabric industry was that: 'whereas before buyers automatically turned to the Continent, they were forced to turn to their home suppliers', allowing manufacturers a steady flow of bread-and-butter business, which allowed them to invest in developing new weaves and more advanced design.\textsuperscript{40} However, by 1937 a similar level of imports of the cheap printed and woven goods were being imported, due to subsidies and other strategic responses from the main Continental supplying countries.\textsuperscript{41} The effect of bilateral trade agreements and the imposition of quotas on the import of certain foreign textiles to British colonies in 1934 is shown in Table 5.1.\textsuperscript{42} The decline in exports to Quota and Trade Agreement countries\textsuperscript{43} appears to have been far less severe than the decline to other countries, while exports to the Dominions actually increased during the 1930s. This increase is not evident in the JCCTO market data given in Section 4.4.1.2.

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{38} Dupree, M. 'Figurehinge Against Fate: The Cotton Industry and the Government during the 1930s', \textit{Textile History}, Vol. 21, No. 1, 1990, p111-2.
  \item \textsuperscript{39} Dupree, M. op. cit., p110.
  \item \textsuperscript{40} Goodale, B.W. 'British and Foreign Upholstery Fabrics: Anomalies of the Present Situation', \textit{The Cabinet Maker & Complete Home Furnisher}, 25/6/38, p453.
  \item \textsuperscript{41} Strategies of supplying countries and weave imports discussed in Goodale, E.W., ibid.
  \item \textsuperscript{43} Ibid. The Trade Agreement counties were: Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, Yugoslavia, Poland, Yugoslavia, Turkey, Argentina, Uruguay and Peru.
\end{itemize}
Table 5.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1909-13 (million linear yards)</th>
<th>1929 (million square yards)</th>
<th>1938 (million square yards)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>2,507</td>
<td>1,374</td>
<td>293</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominions</td>
<td>382</td>
<td>340</td>
<td>390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quota Colonies</td>
<td>322</td>
<td>266</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade Agreement Countries</td>
<td>599</td>
<td>308</td>
<td>229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Other Countries</td>
<td>2,666</td>
<td>1,384</td>
<td>319</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>6,475</td>
<td>3,672</td>
<td>1,387</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.2.4 The Dye Industry

A British dye industry was fostered by the Government during the First World War and in the inter-war period. Germany had a monopoly of chemical vat dyestuff manufacture before the first world war, and in the sudden scarcity during the war Morton Sundour began to develop a range of vat dyes (see Section 5.4.2.3). The Government established British Dyes Ltd. on a semi-nationalised basis in 1915 to develop new vat dyes. The amalgamation of these and other companies led to the formation of I.C.I. in 1927 (to counter the newly formed German I.G. Farbenindustrie conglomeration: an agreement with I.G. Farbenindustrie was reached in 1932, joining Britain to a ring of German, French, and Swiss manufacturers of dye, which resulted in a rise in price of nationally produced dyes.). The Government also established a scientific committee and a Colour Users' Conference. Support for the industry was institutionalised in 1920, with the creation of the Dyestuffs Industry Development Committee, which continued to 1930. The fledgling industry was protected from late 1918...

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45 In 1919 the British Dyestuffs Corporation was created, from British Dyes Ltd. and Levinstein Ltd. The Government was a shareholder in the company, with the right to appoint two directors and a right of veto. It bought Scottish Dyes Ltd. in 1926 and amalgamated with United Alkali Co. and Brunner Mond & Co. in the formation of I.C.I. in 1927. ICI took over British Alizarine Co. Ltd. in early 1932, becoming the main dye manufacturer in the British market.


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by the banning of all import of foreign dyestuffs except under licences to be granted by the Dyestuffs Advisory Licensing Committee, in cases where the colour could not be produced by a British manufacturer for equal quantity and quality at a fair price.\(^{47}\) The Licensing Committee was established in February 1919, and set up a Central Importing Agency with agents to be appointed in big towns. This licensing system was temporarily halted in August 1919, when it was challenged in court, and Lord Sankey ruled that import of chemicals and dyes could not be banned under the legal mechanism used. This resulted in a sudden import of dyestuffs from Germany, undermining the market for dyes by the new British industry. The 1920 Dyestuffs (Import Regulation) Act finally formalised the ban on the import of foreign dyestuffs that could be made in this country. Subsidy for development of the dye industry from the Government was implemented concurrently with the licensing system, with substantial grants of up to 40% of capital investment on buildings and plant and further sums in aid of research.\(^{48}\) Continuing controversy over this market intervention is indicated by the statement of Mr Ashley of the Board of Trade in May 1922 that the Dyes Act would not be repealed while the present Government was in power\(^{49}\) (see Section 5.3.2 for industry views).

The Board of Trade became involved in measures to fix standard prices of dyes, to further assist the industry. The increase in dye prices, due to the new structure, was considerable: the CPA commented that it would cost them about £98,000 more for the dyes than their foreign competitors.\(^{50}\) Mr Lennox Lee was asked by the British Dyestuffs Corporation to join a trade delegation visiting Berlin to come to an agreement with the German Government and I.G. Farbenindustrie in May 1922.\(^{51}\) At the meeting, a plan was proposed that when quality of products and efficiency of manufacture was equal, there would be a percentage distribution of output and agreed prices. In order that this situation could develop, German technical assistance was needed. This conclusion was reported to Mr Stanley Baldwin, Sir P. Lloyd Greame and Mr Woolcock on their return, with the support of the German Government, but no further developments are recorded.\(^{52}\) The Licensing Committee had a Special Committee that dealt with reparations from Germany and commandeered colour stocks that could not be

\(^{48}\) Morton, J. op. cit., p224.
\(^{49}\) M75/ Directors’ Minute Book No. 7, 9/5/22.
\(^{50}\) Ibid., 2/5/22.
\(^{51}\) Ibid., 9/5/22.
\(^{52}\) Ibid., 30/5/22.
made in England or Switzerland in return for foodstuffs. It had the power to fix prices, due to its stock of reparation colour. In May 1925 the Reparation Department was closed down, and the remaining printing colours – valued at about £100,000 – were offered to the Colour Users Committee. The import licensing system continued, with prices negotiated through the Licensing Committee. By 1929, the factor price of dyes agreed by the Licensing Committee was 1.75. Licensing and control of the import of dyestuffs continued during the interwar period, with the extension of the 1920 Act in 1930 and 1934. The Dyestuffs Advisory Committee was dissolved in the 1960s and discussions on possible tariff replacements for the 1920-34 Dyestuffs Acts continued into the 1970s.

5.2.5 Other Economic Strategies of Government Intervention

The Board of Trade was also directly involved with production companies, to nurture individual industries. The Board of Trade gave technical and design assistance to ailing industries via the Rural Industries Bureau. The Trade Facilities Acts (1921-26) assisted industry by guaranteeing the payment of the interest or principal of a loan, to relieve unemployment by encouraging the placement of capital works. The Trade Facilities Board made loans to assist investment in industry: for example, Morton Sundour Fabrics were given a grant of £90,000 for equipping the works of Standfast Dyeing & Printing Ltd. in March 1924 and Seedhill Finishing Co. expanded into printing with a loan of £25,000 for equipment in the early 1920s. The Export Credit Guarantee Scheme supported export in particular markets by individual traders, and was especially useful to shippers. This insurance scheme covered insolvency and transfer risk. Some aspects of the scheme acted against the textile industry, since the export of textile printing machines was supported, allowing the subsidised Russian production to severely undercut British printed cotton with British machines exported from 1928 (Section 4.4.1.2).
The broader economic policy of the Government from 1931 was also of assistance. The abandonment of the Gold Standard and the subsequent fall of 30% in value of the pound by the end of 1931 assisted exports. Investment was encouraged by the ‘cheap money’ policy of the Bank of England, which dropped its interest rate from 12% to 2% in June 1932; restriction of foreign investment; conversion of the War Loan from 5% to 3.5% and freer bank credit. Industry was assisted directly by the Bank of England by a range of measures, including the Securities Management Trust, Bankers’ Industrial Development Corporation and United Dominions Trust (all in 1929) and Credit for Industry (in 1934).

5.2.6 Design Intervention for Economic Recovery

Economic strategies were combined with an emphasis on raising the standard of design to regain competitive advantage. This design-centred approach was due to a belief in the value of 'good design' as the significant factor in textile production, held both by the societies of designers and by government, dating back to the 1835 Select Committee and its establishment of the Schools of Design, and the wider 19th century movements of design reform and arts and crafts. A high quality of design was believed to be crucial to the economic success of industry, and thus promotion of 'good design' by influencing manufacturers’ taste and encouragement of new designers was felt to be an important role of government. A key event focusing this as a Government strategy in the interwar period was the initial memorandum of a committee of concerned craftsmen, architects and industrialists (the precursor of the DIA) to the Board of Trade in January 1915. This suggested that the expansion of German trade was due to the ‘untiring efforts which the Germans have made to improve the quality of their work’, especially design, and proposed that design education should be involved with the needs of industry and that an exhibition of German design be arranged. The Boards of Trade and Education responded with a pamphlet urging the establishment of an organisation similar to the Werkbund and the funding of an exhibition of Deutsche Werkbund and Wiener Werkstatte goods (see Figures 6.4-7) at Goldsmiths Hall. After the war, the Board of Trade policy of encouragement of design improvement was followed up with the creation of the British Institute of Industrial Art in 1920. It organised

by the FCP, 12/2/30, C.20.

64 Pevsner, N. 'History of the DIA', DIA Yearbook, 1975, p41.

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exhibitions, briefly opened a gallery in Knightsbridge and subsequently established a permanent collection and exhibitions at the Victoria and Albert Museum (Section 6.6.3). Its other area of activity was research, published in pamphlet form as *Industrial Art and the British Manufacturer, The Training of the Middleman* (1927) and *Public Departments and Industrial Art*. 65 Unfortunately, it had some difficulty persuading industry to support it: a CPA minute noted an invitation to contribute exhibits for a permanent exhibition, but 'expressed the opinion that it was not likely to be of benefit to the Association and agreed not to entertain the proposal. 66

A report on *The Present Position and Tendencies of the Industrial World as indicated at the International Exhibition of Modern Decorative and Industrial Arts* in 1925 gave some consideration to the state of British and Continental textile design. 67 An examination in more depth of the education of textile designers was produced in 1929 by the Board of Education for the Joint Standing Committee (Industry and Research) of the British Cotton Industry Research Association (see Chapter 3). 68 This led to a broader initiative by the Board in March 1930. A meeting was called with a group of manufacturers and others to discuss the competitive problems 'due to the alleged design superiority of foreign goods' and 'the concentration or co-ordination of the various efforts tending towards the improvement of taste and the improvement of designed goods.' 69 This followed a debate in the House of Commons (at which Dr Marion Phillips MP suggested the holding of a large national Exhibition of Domestic Art 70) and was a response to perceived general pressure to consider the issue of design. An informal committee was also established by Mr Gillet, Parliamentary Secretary to the Department of Overseas Trade to consider similar matters. 71 The Empire Marketing Board also considered the role of design important, as evident from a speech given by the chairman, Sir William Crawford, to a conference of manufacturers and retailers arranged by the DIA in January 1931 on 'Design a Necessity in the Recovery of British

66 M75/ Directors' Minute Book No. 6, 4/5/20.
69 Notes on meeting, 25/3/30, PRO ED 24/608.
70 Dr Marion Phillips was one of the cohort of Labour women MPs following the election in June 1929.
71 Second Interim Report, Inter-departmental Committee on Industrial Design and Art Education, PRO ED 24/
Building on these separate approaches, an Inter-departmental Committee on Industrial Design and Art Education was formed, under the chairmanship of Sir Edward Crowe, which recommended three strands of response. These were: the establishment of a committee to consider the staging of exhibitions and other forms of educative propaganda; a series of investigations into individual industries, 'to indicate how far the sale of their products may be prejudiced owing to their inadequacy from an artistic point of view and to indicate what can be done to raise their standard', supported by an Advisory Committee of artists; and a committee to investigate the art school system. The Gorell Committee on the Production and Exhibition of Articles of Good Design and Every-day Use was established in 1931. Its Report encouraged the organisation of 'continuous exhibitions of modern design' for 'the improvement of the taste of designers, manufacturers, distributors and the general public' and emphasised the necessity for 'first rate opportunities for designers and a new determination on the part of manufacturers to seek the advice of the best artists of the day'. The Dorland Hall exhibitions resulting from this (Section 6.6.3) were presided over by Lord Gorell (see Figure 6.287). The Council for Art and Industry was formed in 1933 and produced memoranda on industrial art and education and a regular report from 1935 to 1939. It co-ordinated the organisation of the 1935 Royal Academy 'Exhibition of British Art in Industry' and the British display at the Paris Exhibition of 1937. An inquiry into 'Design in Industry' was established in February 1935, chaired by Frank Pick and with other eminent DIA members and Modernist designers on the Committee (see Chapter 3.7.1). Inquiries into 'Design in Commerce' and 'Design in the Distributive Trades' followed in 1936.

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73. PRO ED 24/608: First Interim Report, Inter-departmental Committee on Industrial Design and Art Education, 27/1/31. Recommended members of this committee included Mr Roger Fry, either Mr T.D. Barlow (of Barlow & Jones Ltd.) or Kenneth Lee (Tootal Broadhurst Lee Co. Ltd.), Mr H. Trethowan (advisor to Heal & Son Ltd.) and Mr Clough Williams-Ellis (President of the DIA).
74. Second Interim Report, Inter-departmental Committee on Industrial Design and Art Education, PRO ED 24/608. The recommended Advisory Committee members were: Duncan Grant, M. Cardew, O. Ramsden, C. Ricketts RA or P. Connard RA, Howard Robertson, A. Rutherston, W. Skeaping and R. Schwabe (an art school principal).
76. Gorell Report, op. cit.
77. Individual items listed under PRO BT 57 and 64.

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A formalisation of the professionalisation of designers was also undertaken, with the establishment of the National Register of Industrial (Art) Designers in 1936.80

The Board of Trade promoted British goods through trade exhibitions, with the establishment of the annual British Industries Fair in 1915, a series of Empire Exhibitions (to encourage internal trade within the British Empire and Commonwealth countries) and organisation of British design displays in international exhibitions.81 Textiles were given a prominent place in these exhibitions: at the 1924 British Empire Exhibition, the cotton industry occupied the second largest section, with a range of textile machinery and a film showing the complete process of manufacture and a smaller section of 'Furniture and Decorative Fabrics.'82 The annual British Industries Fair established a separate textile section at the White City at Shepherds Bush in London from 1931-7.83

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79 PRO BT 57/24 and 25.
80 PRO, BT 64/3464/22/44.
81 These commercial exhibitions were organised by the Department of Overseas Trade, within the Board of Trade. Archival material on the British Industries Fairs, 1924 British Empire Exhibition, 1925 Paris International Exhibition, 1935 Brussels International Exhibition, 1937 Paris International Exhibition, 1936 Johannesburg Empire Exhibition and 1938 Glasgow Empire Exhibition is held in PRO BT 60.
5.2.7 Conclusion: Government Response

Government response to the economic conditions in the cotton industry in the 1920s was a series of exhaustive investigations, followed by recommendations of structural reorganisation by massive vertical combination (as advocated by Lazonick). Direct support was given in the establishment and protection of a vat dye industry, in loans for capital investment in industry and credit guarantee for exports. In the early 1930s, the advent of a Conservative Government committed to tariff reform and the international crash and subsequent depression redirected attention towards protection as more interventionist political solutions. This was highly effective in the stemming of colonial export market collapse, and recovery of West African markets (see Section 4.4.1.2.4) and in the expansion of the home market in the 1930s (Sections 4.4.2-3). A contiguous strategy increasingly emphasised by Government during the 1930s was raising the standard of design to improve the competitive position of British goods. There was a deliberate attempt to change the taste of the public, designers, manufacturers and distributors, towards a generally Modernist view of good design (shown in the emphasis on Modernist design and the choice of artists and manufacturers on the various committees: see discussion of Modernism in Section 6.3). The approach taken to achieve these aims included exhibitions, pressure for improvements in art school training and the registration of designers.

84 Lazonick, W. op. cit.
5.3 Collective Industry Response

5.3.1 Pressure on Government for Economic Intervention

There was considerable pressure from industry on the Government to improve the conditions of trade for British companies by imposing tariffs on imports to the UK and restrictions on the import of competitor nations' goods to the colonies. The British Industrial Economic Foundation was formed to campaign against the Gold Standard (consumptive wealth would be substituted as 'the basis of the quantity of money'), for a reduction in taxation and an extension of the Safeguarding of Industries Act, following 'the wonderful progress' of the artificial silk and motor-car industries.\(^8\) The Empire Industries Association, formed for the extension of British preference and the safeguarding of home industries, maintained a strong Conservative grass-roots pressure to introduce protection from 1926.\(^8\) This campaign was also supported by the Federation of British Industry (established in 1916 with tariff reform as its aim), the Association of British Chambers of Commerce, the National Union of Manufacturers, the Empire Producers’ Association and, in 1929, by the Empire Economic Union (established by Lord Melchett, chairman of ICI, Lord Beaverbrook, who owned the Daily Express newspaper, and other domestic industry leaders).\(^8\)

Intergovernmental negotiation intended to reduce the import restrictions of foreign countries often led to specific trade agreements. These processes were usually industry-initiated. One such initiative is shown in the minutes of the Indigo Printers’ Association in May 1919, in which the problem of entry into French colonial markets was discussed, a resolution passed and political representations then made (Section 3.3.1).\(^8\) A further example is the 1926 application by the Furnishing Textiles Manufacturers’ Association to the Board of Trade, for the industry to be included under the Safeguarding of Industries Act, which would protect them from import competition.\(^8\) The Association requested an import duty of 33\(^{1/3}\)% on foreign manufactured articles in competition, due to abnormal foreign competition in the home market.\(^9\) It was noted by the Board that the application was not supported by Morton

\(^8\) M75/ 1922-8/ 19.2, September 1927.
\(^8\) Ibid., pp50-54.
\(^8\) B14/ 6/ 2 1, Indigo Printers’ Association Minute Book 1916-1931, 20/5/19.
\(^9\) PRO BT 55/ 94/ 175: Board of Trade Departmental Minute, ‘Safeguarding of Textiles: Furnishing Textiles’.
\(^9\) Import of woollen and worsted damasks, tapestries and other furniture stuffs from Germany increased from 11
Sundour Fabrics Ltd. (who were not listed as members). It was considered that the furnishing textiles industry was too small to be given such exceptional treatment, and the application was not allowed. In 1931 the cotton industry made vociferous protests to the government against the high import duties and extreme economic conditions acting on exports to India.\(^91\)

The UTR argued that the level of import duty in India in 1931:

'not only defeats its own ends from the point of view of revenue, but is enabling Indian mill owners to sell goods at prices much higher than is justified or necessary, and to this extent the Indian consumer is being penalised.'\(^92\)

Their remedy for the situation was simply to bar external competition:

'The way to make life easier for the population in India is to keep out the Japanese, Italian and Czecho-Slovakian goods now being poured into India and reserve only a market for Lancashire. The enormously increased demand for British cotton goods thus brought about would not only abolish unemployment in the industry but would enable costs to be brought down and prices reduced.'\(^93\)

Three cotton industry delegations, organised by the Manchester Chamber of Commerce, visited India to negotiate with the Bombay Millowners' Association, reaching an agreement – the ‘Lees-Moody Pact’ – that was included in the 1934 Indian Tariff Amendment (Cotton Protection) Act by the Indian Government.\(^94\) There were also delegations and negotiations organised with industrialists from France, Holland, Japan and others over trade agreements.\(^95\)

The Manchester Chamber of Commerce also campaigned on currency issues, particularly the Gold Standard and the restrictions on foreign exchange imposed by many (export market) countries in the 1930s.\(^96\)

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\(^91\) The role of the Manchester Chamber of Commerce in co-ordinating industry on this issue is discussed in Dupree, M. ‘Figurehting Against Fate: The Cotton Industry and the Government during the 1930s’, Textile History, Vol. 21, No. 1, 1990.

\(^92\) Ibid., p.9.

\(^93\) Ibid. 13/5/15, typed memorandum on 'The Indian Question' for the FCP, 24/8/31.

\(^94\) Ibid., pp106-8.

\(^95\) Ibid., pp111-112.
Pressure on import duties also came from the furnishing industry organisations: Ernest Goodale, as President of the Federation of British Furnishing Textiles Manufacturers, was active in campaigning to raise import duties to counter the import situation. Morton Sundour Fabrics Ltd. also pressed the Advisory Committee in May 1938 for increased Import Duties, to protect warp pile cotton. They suggested an emergency duty for velours of 8d per square yard or 20% ad valorem, whichever was the greater, but appear to have been unsuccessful.

5.3.2 Response to Government Dyestuff Policy

Active opposition to the 1920 Dyestuffs (Import Regulation) Act by industry is demonstrated by a minute of the CPA:

‘there was a movement in the Allied Trades in favour of establishing a dye-making industry in the country by subsidy as opposed to licensing. The Calico Printers' Association has campaigned strongly in favour of subsidy, and emphasised that all representatives of the CPA on Chambers of Commerce or Federations did so on the sole condition that they supported this policy’.

Mr Clay, Chairman of the Colour Users Association, decided to accept the Government scheme. In response to this, the CPA proposed that each user would pay a percentage on all dyes purchased (on the same basis as the Cotton Growing Fund, which charged 6d per bale), the sum collected to be handed to the Government for subsidising the home industry.

Tootal, Broadhurst & Lee Ltd. were also instrumental in opposing the Dyestuffs Act, organising a large public meeting in Manchester and a ‘card vote’ in protest. Mr Hewit, representing the FCP, gave evidence to the Economic Advisory Council Committee on the Cotton Industry Inquiry in 1930 on the damage done to the indigo print trade due to the 1920 Act, compared to the general reduction in trade (see Chapter 3, Material Costs: Dyes).

96 Ibid., p106.
98 GO 326/228.
99 M75/ Directors' Minute Book No. 6, 24/2/20.
100 Ibid., 10/8/20.
102 PRO BT 55/ 18, Evidence to the Economic Advisory Council Committee on the Cotton Industry by the FCP, 12/2/30, C.21.
James Morton, of MSF, was a prominent supporter of the Acts and a member of the Dyestuffs Industry Development Committee from 1919-30.\textsuperscript{103} He led the campaign for the retention of the Dyestuff Acts, writing a long letter on the issue that was published in the *Manchester Guardian* and issuing a pamphlet (The Dyes Question. An Open letter to my friends the Free Trade Members of Parliament) which was sent to the Prime Minister and President of the Board of Trade in 1930, with 1,200 copies issued by ICI as part of the campaign.\textsuperscript{104}

The price of the reparation dyestuffs to British colour users was also controversial. A proposed factor of three times the pre-war prices for reparation colour, put forward by the Colour Users Committee in February 1923, was unacceptable to the British Dyestuffs Corporation and Scottish Dyes Ltd., since they could not produce on that basis.\textsuperscript{105} The CPA minutes show a reference to reparation colour prices again in March 1925, when it is noted that the Licensing Committee had agreed to a factor of 2.5 times the pre-war prices.\textsuperscript{106}

### 5.3.3 Schemes for Rationalisation of Production

Calico printing manufacturers responded to the alarming economic situation with an attempt to further rationalise the industry in the same way as the cotton industry, with conglomerations of firms and the decommissioning of production facility. A Closed Works Scheme was agreed in a conference between the CPA, BDA and BA on 19th December 1927.\textsuperscript{107} This stated that if one of the Associations closed a works, the other two Associations would pay a quarter of the costs each. Oakenshaw Works was one such works, brought into the scheme in April 1929.\textsuperscript{108} The closed works or land was leased out, rather than sold, with a covenant in the lease agreement that prevented the textile trade being restarted on that site. In a second Joint Conference of the Associations, the suggestion was made that the combined Associations or FCP buy up other commission-printing, dyeing or bleaching works in order to close down or to reduce their competitive threat by running it themselves.\textsuperscript{109} A competitive

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{103} Morton, J. op. cit., p224.
  \item \textsuperscript{104} Ibid., pp233-4 and p306.
  \item \textsuperscript{105} M75/ Directors' Minute Book No. 7, 20/2/23.
  \item \textsuperscript{106} M75/ Directors' Minute Book No. 8, 24/3/25.
  \item \textsuperscript{107} M75/ Minutes of Joint Conferences between Directors of the CPA, BDA and BA.
  \item \textsuperscript{108} Ibid., Sub-committee of Joint Conferences, 29/4/29.
  \item \textsuperscript{109} Ibid., 16/1/28.
\end{itemize}
company that included all three specialisations seemed the most suitable for such a purchase by the combined Associations, and United Turkey Red was suggested as a possible example. A block of shares in UTR was offered to the Associations, but since it was insufficient to provide a controlling interest, the offer was not accepted. Morton Sundour Fabrics offered their commission subsidiaries (Scottish Dyers and Printers Ltd. and Standfast Dyers and Printers Ltd.) to the Bradford Dyers' Association, who were promoting the voluntary scheme, but the BDA could only offer shares in exchange and the scheme foundered. A similar strategy was pursued by the equivalent French Dyers Federation - 3% of turnover was contributed to a fund which purchased such businesses. The CPA considered several such schemes. In September 1929 'an arrangement' with F. Steiner & Co. in which all Steiners' 2 million piece production would be transferred to the CPA's machines was discussed: although this would reduce costs per piece, it was thought that a works in India would be a more cost-efficient solution. In February 1930, Drew told a CPA director that 'he had come to the conclusion that a fusion with the Association by an exchange of shares was desirable.' A committee formed to consider an amalgamation between the CPA, UTR, Steiner, Simpson & Godlee and Drews met in September 1930, with a valuation of company assets and earning potential discussed.

The ineffectiveness of voluntary agreement in bringing about any large-scale reorganisation was commented on by the Joint Committee of Cotton Trade Organisations in 1931. Their Resolution stated that:

'The Joint Committee believes that the first step towards any form of reorganisation or towards trade recovery is adjustment of production capacity in the cotton industry to its present and prospective needs so that all active units should, as nearly as possible, run full time.'

They recommended that investigators be appointed to research data for the construction of a statutory scheme, for 'maintaining a closer relation between capacity and demand', to be

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110 Ibid., noted on 26/3/28.
111 M75/ Directors' Minute Book No. 12, 3/9/29.
112 M75/ Directors' Minute Book No. 13, 11/2/30.
113 Ibid., 16/9/30.
114 M75/ Minutes of the Joint Conferences of the CPA, BDA and BA Directors, 5/5/31.
promoted as 'Lancashire's Remedy'. 115 The response by the Joint Conferences pointed out the heavy charge on the trade for compensation of surplus concerns. Before destroying valuable machinery or discharging trained workpeople, there should be a fuller examination of wages, hours and conditions of working; taxation and on-costs; and arranging some method of allowing normal economic forces to work. Simultaneously with these discussions, there were negotiations with the unions on the Wages Committee of the Allied Trades. They agreed to the appointment of an investigator with statutory powers, but were of the definite opinion that no survey of the potential capacity of Lancashire measured against prospective demand will be of much use unless it includes an investigation of the capacity and method of functioning of the distribution side of the cotton textile industry. 116

There appears to have been a gap of some years, before the FCP established a State of Trade Committee in summer 1934. This committee presented a report in which a pool and quota system were recommended. 117 A fund to buy up machines was proposed, and separate provisions given in the quota scheme for West African printers and new entrants to the industry. It was hoped that the quotas would be a marketable asset that would encourage consolidation. Members of the Dyers' Committee met the Bankers Industrial Development Trust and interviewed Sir Nigel Campbell, through whom they hoped to float their sinking fund. 118 He recommended several 'suitable men' as independent accountants and Mr Colin M. Skinner, of Jones, Crewdson & Youatt in Manchester, was appointed to carry out a preliminary enquiry. Mr Skinner sent out questionnaires investigating the production capacity and demand of the trade and concluded that about two-thirds of the current machine power in the trade was all that was required to meet current demand. 119 This process finalised into a scheme to introduce a closed industry with a quota system, entitled 'The Calico Printers Reorganisation Scheme.' It was intended to compensate companies if they were under quota and penalise them if they produced over their quota, following a similar policy by the cotton manufacturing cartels, who restricted production with the Spindles Act and the closing of

115 Ibid.
116 Ibid.
117 Turnbull, G. op. cit., pp378-82.
118 Letter from 'A' Department representative on FCP State of Trade Committee to UTR Board, UGD 13/ 5/ 7, 12/3/35.
119 Turnbull, G., op. cit., p381.
mills. The proposal was put forward by a deputation of company representatives to the Board of Trade on November 16th 1936. They stated that they:

'now recognised that the slump in the cotton industry which had begun in 1920 was different in character from all previous depressions, and that there is no prospect of recovering what had been lost as a result of changed world conditions. . . there is an amount of work barely sufficient to employ much more than half of the total capacity.'

The scheme was not approved by the Board of Trade, on the grounds that it would undermine efficiency and exclude newcomers. However, the President of the Board of Trade had encouraged the idea of schemes to help the export industry, provided that they covered the cotton industry as a whole rather than sectional specialisations. The Joint Committee therefore began a process of consultation and negotiation which led to a proposal based on the recommendations of George Douglas (Chairman of the BDA) in 1935. He had suggested an Industrial Reorganisation Enabling Act that would establish a Standing Advisory Committee by which all proposals for restrictions and statutory control of the members of an industry would be considered, to overcome the obstructions of minorities in voluntary schemes. Finally, the Cotton Industry (Re-organisation) Act was passed in August 1939, but not put into effect due to the war. It contained minimum price schemes with elaborate safeguards and redundancy schemes by acquisition. The price management techniques were dropped after the war, but a Cotton Council and 25% subsidies for re-equipping spinning mills was supported, with the 1948 Cotton Spinning Re-equipment Subsidy Act.

The piece dyers were also discussing a quota system, as a separate scheme. This scheme for quotas and a pool for compensation, combined with the elimination of redundant plant, was developed by the 'Committee of 12', representing the Dyers Association, the Artificial Silk Dyers Federation and unallocated dyers between 1934-8. A voluntary scheme involving the whole industry - The Dyers' Graded Price Agreement - was concluded in 1938. This was a legally binding agreement to maintain a fixed minimum price, combined with a quota system.

120 BT 64/14/1872/36.
121 Ibid.
5.3.4 Schemes for Rationalisation of the Distribution System

A proposal to re-form the trade into market-orientated organisations was made by the Joint Committee of Cotton Trade Organisations in 1929.¹²³ This proposal was approved by the Board of the CPA, who also agreed that the FCP should subscribe to the Memorandum and Articles of the controlling company. They noted that the Joint Committee of Cotton Trade Organisations:

"had, in an endeavour to organise trade which had been lost to foreigners, formed a controlling Company to promote and protect trade in all kinds of textile products, and also a Syndicate, which would engage in the production, manufacture and marketing of the goods. In every case of a particular trade being scheduled for attack, a separate Company would be formed for that purpose."

The Manchester Chamber of Commerce was also active in the development of market-focused response to competitive threat. A special committee was established in 1930 to analyse and co-ordinate response to Japanese competition. There was a strategy to keep a close watch on Japan and to learn from it. A report on the importance of large-scale organisation and vertical integration in Japan in 1928, led to the formation of cotton machinery, production and export market consortia.¹²⁴ These consortia included the Eastern Textile Association (a vertical grouping of manufacturers, finishers and merchants selling to the Far East). The Joint Conferences of the three Associations also discussed action against international competition. On 4th February 1929, the steps already taken by the Advisory Board to deal with Japanese competition in China were reported, and measures taken to deal with black coatings in opposition to the Japanese.¹²⁵

In the evidence and conclusions of the Cotton Inquiry by the Economic Advisory Council Committee in 1930, the merchant sector was considered as a key locus of difficulty in improving the competitive ability of the industry.¹²⁶ The CPA felt that the distribution system was wrong: excessive number of merchants in strong competition with each other caused a high number of small orders and depressed prices and a general lack of co-operation between merchants and producers. They state:

¹²³ M75/ Directors' Minute Book No. 12, 12/11/29.
¹²⁴ The report was produced by K.D. Stewart (a textile merchant who visited Osaka) and John Tattersall and John Ryan of the Cotton Yarn Association. Dupree, M. op. cit.
¹²⁵ M75/ Minutes of the Joint Conferences of the CPA, BDA and BA Directors, 4/2/29.
'It may be suggested that we should try and get the Merchants either to rationalise themselves or to come in with us. We are doing what we can, but there are difficulties and dangers.'

Mr Lennox Lee, the Chairman of the CPA, put in a personal memorandum to the Committee proposing a merger of the three finishing combines and the Manchester shipping merchants. This dramatic proposal was undermined by discouraging evidence from the Shipping Merchants Committee of the Manchester Chamber of Commerce, who spoke of the problems and unlikelihood of any type of combination being arranged among the 1500 merchants involved in the trade. The Report of the Committee in 1930 noted that the merchants acted as the only intelligence department and advertising agents of the industry. Producers were dependant on orders of the merchant, whose interests were different to theirs. This reliance on them had failed in the bulk trade of standard priced goods, where price was the important factor and international competition had undercut Lancashire prices. The final conclusions were:

'To enable the manufacture of standard goods once more to be energetically developed, Lancashire requires a marketing system so organised as to secure a steady outlet for goods produced by the most economic methods... The necessary measures for reorganisation are known and the finance required is available.'

Although expecting Lancashire employers and organised operatives to take the measures essential to recovery, it would be the duty of the Government 'to confer upon them any necessary power' if any section proved recalcitrant. Recommendations included technical improvement in spinning and weaving, amalgamations in spinning and manufacturing and 'the formation of strong and well balanced amalgamations among the merchants also deserves careful consideration.'

The merchanting aspect of the trade was also considered by Geoffrey Turnbull's 1935 vertical rationalisation scheme. He argued that each market should be taken individually, and the merchants shipping to this market collected together into a 'market block.' They would act as a common organisation for merchant companies, who would continue to be economically

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124 BT 55/18, op. cit.
independent (in the same way as the Federations). In order to reduce the number of merchants in the block to those best suited to fill the anticipated demand, the trade would be controlled by the issue of Government export licences. These 'blocks' would also act as pressure groups for tariff change and other political action, for the pooling of trade information or provision of a joint intelligence service and sharing of trade risks. They would reduce costs by ordering standard lines in bulk. When the scheme was working well, bulk contracts for cloth, yarn and raw cotton could develop, providing greater security for all levels of the trade. This would lead to possible mergers of those companies in the block, and probably to a series of vertical combinations. This would change the nature of the merchanting system, which would then be able to act aggressively against national competitors in the same way as the Japanese merchanting organisations, providing more business for all parts of the British cotton trade. It would be an extension of the small 'Through Ticket Scheme' of 1927: such previous efforts had failed due to lack of enthusiasm and co-operation. He concluded that in depressed times, vertically integrated concerns are more successful in meeting difficulties than horizontal structures - and that the rapid expansion of the trade occurred while the trade was vertically integrated.

5.3.5 Co-ordinated Policy on Pricing

A concerted response to price competition in the calico printing industry was directed by the FCP Minimum Price Committee. On the 22nd June 1922, they reduced the prices on Blotches, Light and Heavy Covers and Blotch Covers, under pressure from members involved in Eastern Trade. A general reduction in prices of 10% across all styles was instituted in 1923, when meeting severe price competition due to lower currency values of European (particularly Italian) competition. However, this did not increase volume of business and reduced profits, and wholesale reductions were abandoned. The problem of disproportionate costs incurred to the printer by small runs and multiple colourways, due to the increasing practice of merchants giving 'hand-to-mouth' orders, was countered in October 1926 by extra charges for small runs and greater numbers of colours. Reductions were focused within individual markets, with the CPA being allowed to drop prices in the Egyptian

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128 M75/1922-8/19.6 FCP Regulations as to Engraving Minima, 11/10/26. The Scale of Reductions on the basis price allowed increases for quantity and colours per pattern but reduced as the number of ways required increased. Small runs were 20 or 30 lumps of 120 yards. An example of the extra charges quoted is: 50 lumps printed would be 1/8d extra per yard for three or four colours, 1/2d extra for five or six colours and 3/4d extra

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market to meet Italian and Czechoslovakian competition. Other schemes to counter export competition included a 'Through Ticket Scheme' in 1927 (agreed with the Shipping Merchants Committee of the Manchester Chamber of Commerce) and 'Specific Cases' schemes in 1927 and 1928. An example of this is the severe price cut granted for black discharge printing for India. These concessions were based on an agreement with the Indian Section of the Manchester Chamber of Commerce (merchants) to give a price cut in a specific printing type if this was accepted as only pertaining to that market. The price-fixing agreements within the FCP became seriously undermined by firms making individual price concessions. A meeting took place in 1930 to discuss an alternative price arrangement and appointed a committee to devise a suitable scheme. This Working Party of the FCP included non-member firms, but failed to agree any scheme that would have complete agreement. The final breakdown of the price agreements came in 1932. This led to severe cost reduction and some bankruptcies as export prices were dropped.

5.3.6 Production Facilities Overseas

Another response was to develop combined production facilities within key export markets, to avoid tariff barriers and take advantage of the cheaper costs of production in these markets. The CPA, UTR and F. Steiner had discussions on establishing a printworks in India between 13th July and 21st December 1920. A more efficient distribution system was proposed in November 1929, in which the CPA, UTR, Drews and others would co-operate in a joint selling structure in India. However, this idea did not result in any actual scheme, due to the opinion of CPA directors that it was not practicable to co-operate in one part on the world, but act competitively in others. The Lancashire Cotton Corporation informed the CPA in September 1930 that they would be interested in any venture undertaken by the Association in Egypt. The first objective of the LCC was stated to be India and China: they had given preferential terms to 'certain Houses' which they were willing to extend to the Association, and had sent out staff to the big markets to sell direct to the Shippers. The Bleachers

for more than six colours.

129 BT 55/ 18 Evidence by the FCP to the Economic Advisory Council Sub-Committee on the Cotton Industry, C.17.
130 Turnbull, G., op. cit., p344.
131 M75/ Director's Minute Book No. 6.
132 M75/ Director's Minute Book No. 12, 12/11/29.
133 M75/ Director's Minute Book No. 13, 2/9/30.
Association was asked to join the CPA's Chinese printing company (The China Printing and Finishing Co. Ltd.) in September 1930. Negotiations in 1936-7 resulted in a joint venture by the CPA, BA and W. Beardsall & Co. Ltd. (with 39.38% funding from the Indian public), under the name of Mettur Industries Ltd., which established a works at the Mettur Dam in India during 1938.

5.3.7 Conclusion: Combined Industry Response

The textile industry - and particularly the finishing section - co-operated closely in their response to economic conditions. Textile industry organisations were given a central role by Government in the licensing of dyestuff imports, negotiation with foreign textile industries, and the collection and analysis of industry data. The vertically integrated structures of Japan and the United States, advocated by Lazonick, were considered by the industry, but primarily within the finishing and distribution sectors. A vertically integrated company was established by the JCCTO, but its effectiveness is unknown. The main approach taken was the development of rationalisation and quota schemes, which were ultimately unsuccessful as a supra-industry strategy in the interwar period. However, effective price control was operated by the industry for much of the period, with focused export market schemes to counter particular competitive threats and some establishment of production facilities within export markets.

134 Ibid., 9/9/30.
135 M75/ Minutes of the Board of Directors of Mettur Industries Ltd., 31/8/37 agreement on percentage ownership and prediction of start of production in August 1938.


5.4 Company Response

5.4.1 Diversification of Product

MSF diversified into a broad range of chemical research, technology and weaving fields, resulting in the formation of a series of subsidiary or joint ownership companies. The companies were: Solway Dyes Ltd. (later Scottish Dyes Ltd.; Section 4.3.2.3), Sundour Bookcloths Ltd. (Section 4.3.2.4), Caledon Loom Co. (automatic weaving technology for chenille and Wilton carpets: Section 4.3.2.1) and FNF Ltd. (applying the automatic weaving technology to fabric production), Scottish Folk Fabrics (which produced tapestry, rug-weaving inspired by Indian work at Kalimpong, high quality appliqué embroidery and ‘Panurge’ stuffed felt animals) and Matthew Pollock Ltd. (a furniture company in Ayrshire, in which control was acquired when his nephew Alec requested financial assistance). There were also particular weaving developments, such as machine tufted woollen carpets (mainly used for contract work, of individually designed carpets) and machines for producing hooked rugs, rayon development (Section 4.3.2.2), wallcloths and synthetic leathercloths (Section 4.3.2.4). An additional sideline was the development of a coal hydrogenation process that also provided heat to make steam for electricity generation (the Maclaurin Low Temperature Carbonisation Process), eventually establishing a plant for Glasgow Corporation.

An early form of diversification by the CPA was the manufacture of glucose: a series of applications for permission to the Customs and Excise Office for different CPA works were minuted in 1917-18. A more significant venture was the movement to silk printing, which necessitated lengthy negotiations and considerable investment. Negotiations began in July 1925 with Clavel & Lindenmeyer, a Basle firm engaged in high class silk finishing to establish a manufacturing works on the Wirral peninsula, but it came to nothing. Efforts were then transferred to the possibility of a silk printing works at Macclesfield, in partnership with J. Whiston & Co., in which the wholesaler/retailer Messrs Debenham was expected to

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137 Ibid., p376.
138 Ibid., p353.
139 Ibid., p292.
140 M751 Directors' Minute Book No. 4, Sealing Committee, 30/3/17-30/10/18, with additional application in 22/11/21.
141 M751 Directors' Minute Book No. 9, 21/7/25.
be a large shareholder (implying effective vertical co-operation).\textsuperscript{142} The outcome of these discussions appears to have been the adaptation of Birch Vale works as a silk printing works: samples of printed silk orders from 1928-38 are shown in the Birch Vale sample book (see Figures 6.85-92). An additional strategy was the vertical expansion into making-up, with the purchase of Brook Mfg. Co. in 1932, a further making up factory in November 1934 and an overall factory in 1936.\textsuperscript{143} Overall, Pitt considered the CPA Board’s approach tentative and indecisive, although he states that the CPA was no longer interested in silk production after 1926.\textsuperscript{144}

Chemical by-products were a sideline of the United Turkey Red Co., which had a chemical sales department that sold soapflakes, soaps, Veloshave, Turkey Red oil and cutting oil. It also had a small hosiery department and a garment production department, which had a sudden increase in sales in 1928-9 (Figure 4.1). The UTR also diversified into, or moved between, alternative established varieties of fabric as demand emerged. Examples include the comment in April 1922 that a Manchester firm booked the largest order in their history for Jeans in Karachi: the 'A' Department head promised that he would look around and see that this Company got the opportunity for any business that was doing.\textsuperscript{145} By January 1925, they had a regular Karachi jeans business with Ralli Brothers and were keeping them well supplied with new designs for their Calcutta jean business.\textsuperscript{146} The company also kept a close watch on changes in quality of the fabrics sold by their competitors, acquiring samples whenever possible: in December 1922, it was reported that the chintz business was not good, as a cheaper quality was being sold in Manchester than London, and that there was a demand for cheaper lots of cretonne (samples were requested for both these fabrics and it was noted also that a sample of native printed scarves had been received).\textsuperscript{147} Silk printing was developed as another line of the ‘D’ department in 1924, with fancy blocks produced for silk work in August 1924 and samples produced for Brown Vickers Silk in December. The issue was raised in March 1935, when the question of silk printing was discussed generally and by

\textsuperscript{142} The company would have a capital of £120,000, under the management of Mr Whiston: Ibid., 3/11/25.  
\textsuperscript{143} Pitt, S., op. cit., p142.  
\textsuperscript{144} Ibid., p141.  
\textsuperscript{145} UGD 13/5/6: Minutes of Directors and Heads of Departments, April 1922.  
\textsuperscript{146} Ibid., January 1925.  
\textsuperscript{147} Ibid., December 1922.
January 1936 the company was soliciting orders on silks, although they were ‘warned by the Works to avoid Flats, Taffetas and Suedes.'

Ferguson Bros. took a highly active approach to product development, discussed in Sections 5.4.2.2-4. They do not appear to have diversified into other fields, such as chemical production or garment manufacture. The lack of available minutes for Turnbull & Stockdale Ltd. prevents analysis of particular strategies. There is no evidence of any distinct change in product range from the account book data.

5.4.2 Investment in Research

Analysis of the development of improvements in fabric, dye and finish of textile industry products, to improve competitive position by emphasising the quality of the product or by producing cheaper alternatives to popular fabrics, is discussed in Sections 5.4.2.1-4.

5.4.2.1 Research into Production Techniques

The commitment to research showed by MSF in dye production was also demonstrated by a drive to develop more efficient weaving mechanisms and in the early adoption of screen printing (see Section 5.3.1.4). The CPA carried out a continuous process of research and development of process machinery, giving monetary awards to those who invented improvements. For example, Mr Derby of the Bingswood Branch was given £25 in December 1918 (and a previous 10 guineas) for an idea of improving the method for delivering cloth to a new Tinting machine, while Mr Gilbertson was given £25 for his work with the 'Gumming Blankets' idea in April 1920. Negotiations with a Mr Clegg for his secret engraving process, which was said to be very valuable and able to save 25-30% for some classes of mill work, continued from February-March 1919. Research into special

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148 UGD 13/5/7, 13/3/35 and 15/1/36.
149 The Fly Needle Frame knitting machine or FNF machines were developed, with a weft supply mechanism making wefted knitted cloth at 1,000 wefts per minute by 1931. Collaboration with James Templeton & Co. Ltd. led to a joint company named Caledon Loom Co. in 1932 to develop their potential for carpet, followed by the establishment of a joint company with Courtaulds Ltd. named FNF Ltd., in 1935 to broaden the patent applications to other fabric production. Morton, J. op. cit., pp336-361.
150 M75/ Directors' Minute Book No. 5, 3/12/18.
151 M75/ Directors' Minute Book No. 6, 3/14/20.
152 M75/ Directors' Minute Book No. 5, 4/2/19 and 4/3/19.
printing effects was carried out by the Technical Committee, with laboratory reports produced on printing with oil colour, bronze, lacquer and beads. A series of patents were applied for in relation to technical improvements, including improvements in printing cotton fabrics, in ageing machines, in blocks employed, a novel effect on raised cloth in June to October 1919. Ferguson Bros. did not develop their own process improvements (the processes used were described in their 1924 centenary publication and are given in Appendix 4.2). Their approach was to buy new machinery and adapt their processes quickly, as new techniques became available (see Appendix 4.1 for list of expenditure). For example, they made an annual agreement with Messrs. Tootal Broadhurst Lee & Co. Ltd. for a Non-Creasing Process Licence in 1936. Research into the techniques used in the local fabrics produced within target markets was carried out by calico printing companies. For example, Hubert J. Barrett (a calico printing company and merchant) lent the Manchester Art Galleries Industrial Art Collection a specimen of tie dyed cloth. They commented that 'inside every knot there appears to be a small seed. Although we have been 40 years in the trade we have never been able to obtain a piece before showing the method.'

5.4.2.2 Research in Textile Development

MSF became involved in the field through the chemical manufacturing development at their subsidiary of Scottish Dyes Ltd. A small pilot plant was established, to spin an acetose developed by Zdanovich, a Polish chemist. It was demonstrated to a number of possible licensees, including J.P. Coats and Tootals, before a final transfer of the plant to an Italian company in 1926. The CPA also experimented in industrial chemistry, but their new fabric became available only after the Second World War. In September 1924, they were approached by 'a friend of a Mr Vanstone' with a new process for producing artificial silk, and costed a scheme for setting up a works, with a maximum budget of £150,000. After considerable negotiations however, it was decided in July 1925 that 'As a result of interviews with representatives of Messrs. Courtaulds Ltd., it was not proposed to proceed further with
the scheme for manufacturing artificial silk.\textsuperscript{160} However, in a joint conference on 9th March 1928, each Sectional Association agreed to subscribe £800 per year for five years to a common Art Silk Research Fund.\textsuperscript{161} The fund was to be provided with an initial sum 'to ensure the success of the proposal.'

Vertically integrated companies, such as Ferguson Bros., the UTR, or manufacturers such as Tootal, Broadhurst, Lee & Co. Ltd.,\textsuperscript{162} became involved in the investigation and production of artificial silk fabrics and mixtures of artificial silk and cotton. Ferguson Bros. Ltd. produced artificial silk textiles from 1921, when 3,589 pieces were sold.\textsuperscript{163} By 1928, the total sold was 132,937 pieces. The number of broad fabric types sold increased from seven in 1915-20 to thirteen in 1928 (see Figures 3.37 and 3.38).\textsuperscript{164} In the 1930s, a great number of fabrics types varieties were produced, with different trade names: in 1931 502 fabrics were produced (159 ranges of voile and 343 of other qualities), increasing to 762 varieties of fabrics available in 1939.\textsuperscript{165} The number of new ranges increased steadily from 387 in 1932 (the first year this information was given) to 572 in 1939, indicating a very active programme of research and development. This was made up of 33 types of named fabric, including 19 varieties of Fersyl, 14 of Fersella, 22 of Carlotta and 43 of Suzette.

An active research involvement with the development of artificial silk mixtures is indicated in the UTR Yearbook for 1930:

'Mixed with other textiles, artificial silk has led to the production of many novel effects, which have been rapidly taken advantage of by the print works for the fashion trades. . . in order to anticipate demand for novelties, departments within the print works have been developed to produce novelty cloths and novelty effects.'\textsuperscript{166}

\textsuperscript{160} Ibid., 21/7/25.
\textsuperscript{161} M751 Minutes of the Joint Conferences of the CPA, BDA and BA Directors, 9/3/28.
\textsuperscript{163} DB 110/ 63 1870-1928 Analysis of sales by fabric and country.
\textsuperscript{164} Ibid. 1915-20 fabric types were: voiles, twills, pocketings, shirtings, satteens, silk stripes and percalines. In addition to artificial silk, the new fabrics were moires, poplins and marocaines in 1924, though perocaines were discontinued. In 1925, pierrettes and longcloths were added, with plains and cotton crepes also sold in 1928, but marocaines ceased.
\textsuperscript{165} Ibid., lists of fabrics from 1931-40, back of ledger.
The UTR also developed their techniques for dyeing and printing on artificial silk for job orders, receiving a sample of celanese silk from Messrs Whaley & Co. (merchants) in March 1926 for dyeing and trial orders for printing ‘art silk’ and dyeing celanese silk in July.\(^{167}\) In February 1928, however, problems in the printing of Art Silk dress goods were reported, with a Celenese Co. representative invited to demonstrate improved techniques.\(^{168}\) Experiments were tried of dyeing and printing on viscose art silk rather than celanese in April and a speculative range of printed art silk was shown round London in July 1929.\(^{169}\) They decided to investigate the market further for art silk goods (in particular, Seedhill Finishing Co.), to find out which class were most in demand, in April 1931.\(^{170}\)

5.4.2.3 Research in Development of Dyes

Morton Sundour Fabrics invested heavily in the development and manufacture of ‘sun-fast’ vat dyes, which were heavily promoted in its textile advertising. This specialist emphasis evolved from the vat dye production in the MSF subsidiary Solway Dyes Ltd. Dye production by MSF began due to concern by James Morton at the cessation of supplies of anthraquinone vat dyestuffs from Germany, at the outbreak of the First World War. By 27\(^{\text{th}}\) March 1915, semi-bulk production of Indanthrene Blue and Yellow, followed by a blue non-vat wool dye also derived from anthraquinone and a series of other dyestuffs previously produced by the Germans.\(^{171}\) Caledon Jade Green, the first green dye to show absolute fastness in strong chlorine bleach, was achieved in September 1920. Within the next two years the Soledon range of vat dyes for animal fibres and dyestuffs for cellulose acetate fabrics were also developed. In 1928 the Scottish Dyes Co. was merged with the Dyestuffs Division of ICI, although James Morton remained on the ICI Dyestuffs Delegate Board. The importance of the sun-fast claim for its dyes is underlined by the prevalence of similar claims by other fabric manufacturers and retailers. For example, in the 1935 British Industries Fair, S. Finburgh & Sons Ltd. advertised ‘Fastene’ Poplin Prints and ‘Vatene’ Guaranteed Poplin wear; Hitchin, Robert & Co. sold Dyott Fadeless Fabrics; J.F. & H. Roberts Ltd. had ‘Fastosun’ furnishing fabrics and Sparrow, Hardwick & Co. Ltd. sold ‘Sparwick’ fadeless

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\(^{165}\) UGD 13/ 5/ 15, 8/9/30.
\(^{166}\) UGD 13/ 5/ 6, 11/3/26 and April 1926.
\(^{167}\) Ibid., 8/2/28.
\(^{168}\) Ibid., 11/4/28 and 10/7/29.
\(^{169}\) UGD 13/ 5/ 7, 8/4/31.
furnishing fabrics. In the 1937 British Industries Fair, Burgess, Ledward & Co. Ltd. exhibited ‘Duro Fabrics’ (with a guarantee that the garment would be replaced if the colour faded), Thorpe & Co. Ltd. advertised guaranteed fadeless colours in furnishing fabrics and the CPA label Grafton Furnishings showing Fadeless Casements with a ‘Six Line Fast Colour Guarantee’.

There is also a pattern of strategic investment by the calico printing companies studied, to support and develop the textile industry in Britain. For example, the CPA, UTR and Ferguson Bros. Ltd. invested in the dye industry, as part of an effort to underwrite new companies created in order to establish an alternative British industry in competition to the German and Swiss. Morton Sundour also took out a shareholding in its competitor, the Government-backed British Dyes Ltd., in 1915, as a strategic measure to remain in touch with developments and to protect their subsidiary Solway Dyes Co. from a possible monopoly.

5.4.2.4 Research in Development of Finishes

Innovation in finishes was a key focus of research in the textile industries in the inter-war period. The competitive scramble for brand name finishes, and the level of investment in research it required, was commented on by the December 1927 Report of the Joint Committee of Cotton Trade Organisations:

'some sections of the finishing trades have gone in too much for improving finishes regardless of cost, instead of for the alternative method of discovering cheaper ways of producing more or less the same finish.'

172 1935 British Industries Fair catalogue
173 M75/ Directors’ Minute Books No. 6 and 7. On 6/1/20, the CPA subscribed for 100,000 £1 shares and bought 106 £8 shares (the balance available) in British Alizarine Co. Ltd. A two-year loan, equal to the shares held by the Association, was offered in 23/8/21, on condition that the UTR and F. Steiner & Co. did the same. On 20/12/21, £30,000 was contributed to the reconstruction of Morris & Co. (the only supplier of Aniline Oil outside the original ring of makers) following its liquidation, on condition that they had a majority on the Board and that other users also contributed. On 10/4/22, the CPA offered to subscribe a maximum of £250,000 to the British Dyestuffs Co., provided other users also contributed, to assist the Government to buy out such shareholders of the company as were not direct or indirect users of colour.
174 In 1921, £2000 was invested in the British Dyestuffs Corporation Ltd. DB 110/ 78.
175 Morton, J. op. cit., p213.
176 Given in the evidence of the Cotton Enquiry, BT 55/18.
Ferguson Bros. developed a wealth of different finishes to their fabrics. Their advertisements refer to linen effect finishes,\textsuperscript{177} crepe and other textured fashion effects (Section 5.3.2), indicating that the great variety of fabrics noted in Section 4.3.2.2 included a wide choice of possible finishes. The CPA’s Research Department was well funded (£5,000 is placed at its disposal in September 1922\textsuperscript{178}) and the chemists regularly patented new finishes, effects and techniques. For example, in May 1922 Dr Fourneaux brought out a patent for a permanent finish, which would be an alternative to Heberlein’s Process. The Broad Oak works was experimenting with the process and it was a sufficiently significant development that the BDA and BA requested a meeting to discuss the position.\textsuperscript{179} Overall, the Association employed more than 100 university trained chemists and other scientific/technical staff by 1939.\textsuperscript{180}

The United Turkey Red Co. kept a keen eye on changes in market demand, requiring adaptations in finish. The minutes record a comment by ‘E’ department in October 1922 ‘that the handkerchiefs in favour in the market had a much softer finish than ours’, while in May 1925 ‘C’ department noted that the London market wanted a softer finish on marocaines. Experimentation to meet market demand and increase the prices obtainable for the handkerchief trade was encouraged by the director G.H. Christie in March 1926. The company kept the same watch on the finishes of their competitors as the quality of fabric: in May 1935 the minutes record that the CPA had improved the finish of their ‘Sarrie standard’ and were said to be asking a higher price, while their ‘Voilsar’ price had been increased by 1/4d per yard.\textsuperscript{181} In October 1935 they instructed the Works to report on the best method of developing a 'named' anti-crease finish under licence for Home Trade styles, on the lines of the BDA's 'Rigmel'.\textsuperscript{182} A range of new cottons were developed in the 1930s, especially for leisure clothing, that were crease-resistant, pre-shrunk or had a washable glazed surface. The washable cotton produced by Tootals was called 'Tobalcro', while British Celenese produced

\textsuperscript{177}DB 110/224, 1934 advertisement: ‘That looks like linen . .’ They all think it’s linen. It feels like linen. Washes beautifully. No trouble to iron. Colour sunfast – such lovely designs. That’s FERGOTEX permanent linen finish.’
\textsuperscript{178}M75/Directors' Minute Book No. 7, 19/9/22.
\textsuperscript{179}M75/ Director’s Minute Book No. 7, 9/5/22.
\textsuperscript{180}CPA Ltd. 50 Years of Calico Printing, CPA Ltd., 1949, p49.
\textsuperscript{181}Minutes of Directors and Heads of Departments, UGD 13/5/6, 10/1922 and UGD 13/5/7, 8/5/35.
\textsuperscript{182}UGD 13/5/7: Minutes of Directors and Heads of Departments, 9/10/35.
a non-wrinkle 'Cruising Crepe' and 'Playtime Prints'. An uncrushable Moygashel linen was also developed, named 'Spring Bak'.

Experimentation in finish at MSF was encouraged by the establishment of a research laboratory at Corstorphine in 1928, following the success of Solway Dyes. Bookcloth production became a major line, after a request from the bookbinders Douglas Cockerell in 1930 for a suitable water-resistant surface for a G.B. Shaw collected edition. A new company (Sundour Bookcloths Ltd.) was formed in partnership with the main producers of bookcloths, Winterbottom Bookcloth Co. Ltd. The development of washable wallcloths followed (since it was a similar process), with jute weaves designed, and various ranges of coloured backfillers and surface coatings produced. A further line of development was synthetic leathercloths, with research into new synthetic coating materials. Additional developments are indicated by the note of a new finishing process at the Standfast printing factory named 'Porlin' in June 1936 in the MSF minutes.

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184 Morton, J. op. cit., p298-301.
185 Ibid., p376.
186 GD 326/228/23/6/36.
5.4.3 Investment in Design

This section will consider whether there was a consensus in the level of investment in design at different economic stages for the dress and furnishing or export and home market divisions of the printed textile industry. Alternatively, different firms may have had a diversity of design investment strategies due to the management approach to design. The individual company case studies will be compared against the national trends in registration of designs to indicate the level of convergence or independence of trend.

5.4.3.1 Design Investment to Counter Economic Depression

The need for the textile industry to concentrate on design as a speciality rather than production of standard lines was stated in 1917, at the inaugural meeting of the Manchester Branch of the DIA, and reported in The Textile Mercury:

'Mr James Morton (Carlisle) made an arresting utterance. He said it seemed to him that we had reached a stage in production when we could no longer depend upon mere competition in price for the maintenance and development of trade... Our education and culture should be made to speak more by way of our productions. With all her skill, Lancashire should build up yet another tradition of a higher type.'

The strategy of using design to create demand by investing in design and publicising novelty during periods of economic stringency was fairly common (see Chapters 2 and 6). The Balfour Report reported that one manager of a textile company stated that more print designs were produced when trade was bad than when it was good, and that during the trade boom of 1919-20 the amount spent by his firm engraving new designs was one-fifth of that spent in the succeeding year. The 1930-1 depression was perceived as a particularly intense period of design innovation:

'When trading first became a bit difficult, producers tried to tempt buyers and stimulate trade by offering an ever wider choice of patterns. Since then the search for novelty has persisted. It has involved the carrying of heavier stocks by both wholesale and retail houses, with greater risks of dead stock and tied up capital.'

187 The Textile Mercury, 27/10/17, p242.
188 Committee on Industry and Trade, Survey of Textile Industries, 1928-9, p354.
189 'Too many designs?', The Drapers' Record, 22/8/31.
However, the pattern of investment in design by the industry, seen in the registration of designs (Figure 5.3), does not show an increase in design registration during 1930-1. The emphasis on production of novelties for the home markets, the colonies and the eastern markets by the UTR in 1930 indicates that competition through design rather than price was used by them as a strategy for export markets. This built on the general trend towards supply of small volumes of a wide variety of designs, occurring due to the new fashion emphasis of the mass market (see Section 2.6). The cost of this approach (in printing a wide range of designs in small runs) was high, with a reaction against it becoming evident: a ‘leading Manchester fabric house’ announced in August 1931 its decision to limit the number of designs produced, to increase the likelihood of longer runs and fewer job lots sold off at the end of the season below cost price.\(^{190}\) A similar view was held by Geoffrey Turnbull, who proposed that textile ranges be cut by half in 1935.\(^{191}\) Investment in design could also be undermined by copying of designs by competitors, particularly Japanese and Italian. The Committee of Civil Research stated that: ‘The Italians copied closely the British designs and colouring.’\(^{192}\) and ‘It is the experience of most merchants that styles and designs which they had originated are copied by foreign competitors, and frequently on lower quality cloth.’\(^{193}\) The United Turkey Red Co. Ltd. noted that Japan had copied the four most popular designs of their ‘B’ Department in May 1933.\(^{194}\)

5.4.3.2 National Registration of Designs

A guide to investment in new design is given by the Register of Designs, although the degree to which designs were registered varied from company to company. Bulk production of new design does not necessarily imply high levels of originality. Figure 5.2 illustrates the number of textile designs registered in a series of January samples of the Register of Designs from 1911-40. Although accurate for the month, chance fluctuations due to when different companies sent in their designs means that analysis of the total annual numbers of designs for which registration was applied should give a more reliable general view of changes (Figure 5.3). However, a significant number were refused or the numbered entries are left blank, so there is some variation between these figures and the actual annual registration of designs to

\(^{190}\) Ibid.


\(^{192}\) BT 55/ 5, CR (CI) 10, p3.

\(^{193}\) BT 55/ 5, CR (CI) 5, Manufacturers’ Committee Preliminary Report, 3/5/29, p25.
be expected. Differences in the pattern of numbers registered shown in Figures 5.2 and 5.3 occur due to the chance fluctuations in the January samples, with greater numbers proportionately in the January samples for 1929 than the earlier 1920s, and the pre-war samples showing a boom in 1913.

Investment in design increased steeply in 1924 and 1925, was maintained at a good level to 1929, before an immediate drop during the recession (1930-2). Figure 2.2 shows that print companies (except for the CPA) and manufacturers and merchants followed a gradual pattern of recovery in design registration to 1935. There was a fall from 1938 onwards, as war became imminent. The lower overall level of registration in the 1930s (Figure 5.3) is likely to be due to the serious decline in export production (particularly by the CPA), which would have reduced the types and volume of designs required. The CPA fell from a dominant position of 64.4% from 1919-29 to 45.8% in 1930-40, while the remaining print companies reduced slightly from 8.1% to 7.2% and the merchants and manufacturers rose from 27.5% to 47%. The transition in dominant source of design investment from print companies to manufacturers and merchants occurred particularly in 1935-9 (indicated in Figures 2.1-2). This may be due to increasing competition in the home market, with a wide range of cheap designs produced by companies used to dealing with the export market (see Section 4.4.2).

Before the First World War, there seems to have been a considerably higher quantity of design produced (c25,000 in 1911-2). This would have been an unusually high level: during the 1840s-50s the number registered was lower than 8,500.195

194 UGD 13/5/7, op. cit., 10/5/33.
195 Turnbull, G., op. cit., p147. The maximum registrations of printed fabrics was 8,360 in 1844, but the total fell to 3,966 in 1852.
5.4.3.3 Design Investment Policy of the Case Study Companies:

5.4.3.3.1 Dress Fabric

5.4.3.3.1.1 The CPA

The CPA registered designs in January over the period are shown in Figures 5.5 and 2.2. The scale of registration in 1913 could have been anomalous rather than a larger trend, since it was at a time of structural re-organisation. Design decisions were taken over by three market-based departments, each of which approved designs in a sub-committee. This may have resulted in an enthusiastic approving of a greater number of designs, suitable for those markets. It was not an efficient system, as noted in the December 1913 Report to the Board: 'There is a complete lack of co-operation between caterers, salesmen and production managers.' Caterers seem to be merchant company managers orientated to market needs. The level of its designs registered did not rise significantly after the war until a sharp increase in 1923. The continuing expansion in 1925 and dramatic rise in 1928 are both marked by attempts to convert all possible artistic talent available within the company into the production of original novelty designs, with a competition for salesmen in 1926 and designers - who may be 'fully occupied with routine work' - in 1928. The steep expansion in new design in 1928 continued in 1929, but the level of investment in freelance design required caused concern. Commenting on design expenditure in August 1929:

'Mr Railton pointed out that designs were more expensive today and the Association is purchasing largely for the Home Fancy Trade; wastage was inevitable but machinery is being put into operation to check each salesman's results. The Management Committee was asked to establish as effective a control as possible.'

The issue of wastage of freelance designs is difficult to examine, since many of the companies do not have records of designs bought, just designs put into production. Subscription pattern purchases from Paris were an additional design cost, with a debatable value as investment.

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196 Pitt, S. op. cit., p90.
197 M75/ Directors' Minute Book No. 12, 20/8/29.
198 The cost for the CPA of subscription patterns was £863 in 1928, dropping to £813 in 1929 it, since the collection of Messrs. Cauwes Bilbie was cut out. By 1932 the expenditure had been reduced to £572, with an additional trial service in 1933 bringing that year's total to £594 10 shillings. In July 1934 the charge had increased to £717. M75/ Directors' Minute Book No. 15 and 16, 15/8/33, 10/7/34.
199 M75/ Directors Minute Book No. 12, 13/8/29. Discussion of the value of subscription patterns to the CPA (See Section 6.5.4.2)
The rise in design registration during 1933 follows the national expansion in the home market for prints (Figure 5.2-3). However, the January sample analysis given in Figure 2.2 indicates that the high registration of the CPA in 1933 may be a company decision, contrary to the general practice. However, there was no sharp rise in the volume of CPA prints sold in the home market in 1933 (Figure 4.35), and the fall in registration during 1934 is likely to be compensation for the over-investment in 1933. The rise in CPA registration in 1937 also occurs during an increase in demand in the home market. The CPA sample book in the Archive of Art and Design shows a range of fairly standard designs of the broadly home market type from 1933/4 to 1946/7. An estimate of the number of designs per year (design numbers are not consecutive) is given in Figure 5.5. This does not follow the pattern of investment inferred from the registered designs, since it gives a rise in design number in 1938/9-39/40, when registration of design and sales were lower, and no indication of the rise in registration or demand of the home market during 1937 occurs. Due to the similarity of much of these designs, it could be that a small proportion were usually registered (explaining the difference to the pattern of registration), but a greater range of designs was introduced during the lower sales period of 1938-40 to stimulate demand. By contrast, the ‘Potter’s’ engraving book shows a general reduction in number of designs engraved from 1934 to 1939, becoming steeper in 1937-8 (Figure 5.13). The reduction in number of designs engraved during 1937 in the ‘Potter’s’ engraving book is mainly in the prints with few colours: this is likely to be due to the increase in import competition of cheap prints (Figure 4.31).

5.4.3.3.1.2 Ferguson Bros. Ltd.

The investment in design (design costs from 1924 and engraving costs) by the Print Department of Ferguson Bros. Ltd. is shown in Figure 5.7. An increase in design investment is shown in 1918-21, with no drop during the economic crash of 1921. The same sudden rise in investment as the CPA is indicated from 1923-5, but the Ferguson 1923 expansion is even more extreme. This is particularly striking since production income fell in 1923, although then rising broadly to 1929. The fabric samples from 1923 show a considerable proportion of the same designs as those shown in a pattern book referred to previously in the CPA analysis. Since Ferguson Bros. Ltd. is not listed as a member company of the CPA, this could mean that the CPA was buying in the designs or commissioning prints (out-sourcing) from Fergusons, or that they were reference or subscription designs produced by neither company.
If the CPA found that the post-war demand for new styles was beyond its capacity, this could be the explanation for the increase in engraving costs during 1923. Design costs are only shown in the accounts from 1924. The sharp fall in 1926, although in line with registered designs, contrasts with the lack of any effect on production, sales income or profits (Figures 4.3, 4.36, 4.66). The rise in design costs in 1927 coincides with the highest point of sales and production for the period for which data is available of 1919-29. There is no significant change in design/engraving cost during the depression, but a fall occurs in 1933-5. The combined costs shown in Figure 5.7 can be contrasted with the engraving costs of patterns given in the lists of new and old ranges available from 1930-9 (Figure 5.8).\(^{200}\) The pattern of investment is similar, but the Print Department cost shows a dip in 1931 and a steeper increase in 1936. A comparison of the 1930-33 engraving costs from both sources (after 1934 engraving is combined with design in the accounts) gives no clear relation between the figures: in 1930 the Print Department figure is higher, but in 1931 lower and in 1932-3 higher. A possibility is that some engraving costs were paid by retailers (there are 20 Harrods ranges listed in 1933-5) and that some engraving costs were borne by the Print Department for designs that were not put into production. The very high engraving cost/design investment from 1936-40 is likely to be due to the rise in number of patterns in 1936, the increasing number of rollers per pattern and the general increase in engraving costs due to wage rises (see Chapter 3). The rise in sales income (see Figure 3.67) in 1937 and 39 (following the sales fall of 1935-6 due to price-cutting in the home market) could be partly a result of this investment, although home market demand rose generally in 1937. The emphasis on design investment is also supported in the advertising of Ferguson Bros. Ltd. For example, in 1928 the 40” voiles were promoted as follows:

‘Ferguson Voiles include over 200 ranges of different designs. The high standard of their designs, colourings and quality have won for them world-wide supremacy.’\(^{201}\)

Complexity of designs increased from 1937-8, with the number of rollers required per design rising from 3.2 to 4.2 and the average cost of designs increasing from £18 14s in 1937 to £21 19s in 1938 and £24 10s in 1939.\(^{202}\)

\(^{200}\) DB 110/213.
\(^{201}\) DB 110/224 advertisement in The Drapers’ Record, 1928.
\(^{202}\) DB 110/213.
5.4.3.3.1.3 United Turkey Red Co. Ltd.

There are no design or engraving cost figures given in the minutes. Investment in design by the UTR for dress and furnishing fabrics is clearly a significant feature of their commercial policy, with frequent notes in the minutes concerning the need for new designs in particular specialities or the testing of new ranges in the market. In 1924 the problem of a dead cretonne market was countered by the development and production of marocains, shadowettes and delainettes speculatively for stock. 203 In August 1925, the director of C Department (which did chintz and twills) reported that he was afraid that the chintz market was going and some other style taking its place, and pointed out the necessity for always being on the lookout for some new line, a concern reiterated in March 1925, when enquiries on any replacement styles for the chintz market were unsuccessful. 204 In March 1927, it was reported that the market was now going in for better class chintz, and in September and October, further improvement in chintz orders was noted. 205 Orders for warp printing samples in 1931 were produced very carefully in the hope of a new line of work. 206 The minutes demonstrate a policy to invest in new products as a way to fight decline, rather than simply cutting costs or prices to survive.

5.4.3.3.2 Furnishing Fabric

Furnishing fabric manufacturers appear to have produced or bought small numbers of designs, and a high proportion appear to have gone into production. Stead McAlpin Ltd. records show commissions by a broad sample of the furnishing print industry, indicating overall trends in design investment (Figure 5.11). It shows a sharp recovery in confidence in 1922-3, but then falls, indicating an overconfident investment by furnishing manufacturers, followed by a much lower investment as compensation in 1924 and an increase up to 1927. No effect from the 1926 coal strike is shown. There is a small increase in design production in 1931, but recovery occurs in 1933-4. A clear decline is shown from 1936, whereas the dress fabric industry has a later peak: 1937 at the CPA and 1938 for Ferguson Bros.

203 Ibid., 10/24, 11/24 and 1/25.
205 Ibid., 9/3/27.
206 UGD 13/5/7, 11/2/31, Department E.
5.4.3.3.2.1 Turnbull & Stockdale Ltd.

The investment in new designs by Turnbull & Stockdale Ltd. increased from 55 in 1930 to 89 in 1936 and remaining fairly steady to 1939 (Figure 5.12). However, the number of designs printed that were engaged to other companies follows a different pattern, falling from 1930 to 1933, increasing from 1933-38 and falling in 1939 (Figure 5.10).

5.4.3.3.2.2 Morton Sundour Fabrics Ltd.

The total designs listed at Morton Sundour Fabrics Ltd. were 248 from 1923 to 1935, while the related A. Morton & Co. Ltd. had a total of 174 block printed textile designs recorded from 1917 to 1930, when the department was closed.\textsuperscript{207} Figure 5.14 gives the overall number of new designs produced. A rise in designs occurs in 1926, with a reduction in 1929, but increase during the depression. There were sharp rises in 1933 and 1935. Figure 3.1 shows a change in policy in the sourcing of designs, in the reduction of freelance designs purchased from 1931 and transition to studio production of all design in 1934.

Design investment at A. Morton & Co. Ltd. (block prints) from 1917-30 is shown in Figure 5.10. The post-war depression and recovery is shown clearly, with only 2 designs produced. A sharp rise in design investment and development occurs in 1922-3, a year earlier than the dress fabric design investment of Ferguson Bros. and the CPA. It falls back to a much less adventurous level of investment in 1924, with peaks in 1926 and 1928. However, these designs were block print designs, and investment ceases in 1930.

\textsuperscript{207} D3 Design Book, Courtaulds Textiles plc archive.
5.4.4 Cost Reduction Policies

5.4.4.1 Rationalisation of Production Facilities

The CPA undertook major rationalisation of its production facilities in response to the loss of export markets and steeply increasing costs, resulting in a concentration of production in 11 printworks. All the Scottish works had been closed by March 1930 (they were less economic due to higher costs, particularly transport and coal), a large number of English works and subsidiary companies and a works in France (Malaunay). There was also a reduction of print capacity within the works remaining, from 21 million pieces in 1919 to 8 million by the end of 1939. However, some new works were bought early in the period and a new works was built at Strines in 1925-9. Pitt notes that the expansion at Strines was exceptional, due to its concentration on quality production, while the plants closed were manufacturing low price products highly marginal in the new economic conditions.

A policy of establishing works in key export markets, to counter Government sponsored local production or Japanese competition with lower costs and tariff barriers, with works in China, Egypt, India and the Dutch East Indies developed during the interwar period. [208][211][213][217][218]

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208 50 Years of Calico Printing, op. cit., p30. In 1918 there had been 29, while the original company formation in 1899 included 46 printworks.


211 The 8 million Figureure is given by Pitt, S. op. cit., p152, from scrapped machines noted in the minutes on 24/1/39.

212 These included Danl. Lee & Co. Ltd. in 1919, Love Clough Works in 1920 and Furness Vale in 1921.

213 50 Years of Calico Printing, op. cit., p35.


215 The China Textile Company works was bought in June 1925 and supplied with CPA rollers and patterns. M75/ Director's Minute Book No. 9, 15/12/25. It was given a subsidiary company identity as The China Printing and Finishing Co. Ltd., with a spinning and weaving mill added later, and in production in 1935. Ibid., pp36-7.

216 A vertically combined works was established, jointly with a spinning and weaving company Filature Nationale d’Egypte, under the management of a subsidiary company (S.E.I.T.). Ibid., pp37-8.

217 A works in Central India was established in addition to the jointly owned Mettur Dam concern. Ibid., p38.

218 A factory in Java was being developed jointly with Dutch interests ‘when the Pacific war began’, while an Australian plant was built hurriedly during the war, immediately after Pearl Harbour, with technicians from the Java plant, under pressure from the Australian Government. Ibid., p41.
period. As far as possible, these works were vertically combined (with spinning, weaving and finishing stages), with partnerships developed with British combines or local manufacturers to achieve this efficiently and to reduce the risk. Pitt comments that this was a very narrow focus to the strategy of establishing productive capacity overseas, with the possibility of taking further advantage of lower production costs in the export markets lost when offers of works in Italy, Belgium, Portugal, Poland, the Soviet Union, Persia and Brazil were turned down. The Jubilee CPA publication stressed, however, that a policy had been adopted of restricting overseas ventures to those countries where trade had clearly been lost to Lancashire forever or a Government had decided that some textile production was essential to that countries' interest.

5.4.4.2 Reduction in Risk due to Lower Stock Orders

There is a clear policy change shown in the reduction in size of sample and stock orders at Turnbull & Stockdale Ltd., from 24-30 pieces of 4-5 colourways as the modal order for roller prints in 1933 (with occasional orders of 50-105 pieces: see design analysis in Section 6.4.2.2) to modal orders of 6 pieces of 4-5 colourways in 1936, 1938 and 1939. Orders for screen prints varied between 2-12 pieces in 1933, but were 2 or 3 piece orders in 1936, and 3 piece in 1938 (though some re-orders also of 3) and 1939. There were very few block orders sizes noted in 1933-9, with one in 1933 (2.5 pieces) and one in 1939 (3 pieces). Surface print orders were fairly small in number, but the modal order in 1933 was 30 pieces, 6-10 pieces in 1936 and 6 (with some re-orders) in 1938. No details of order size were given for 1930.

No major change in the size of 'engaged design' orders is evident, although a slight increase in orders appears to occur during the 1930s: modal orders of 36-50 piece in 1936, 46-50 in 1938 and 43-50 in 1939 (no details of print process given, though they appear to be roller prints; no order size details were given for 1930 or 1933). However, differences in the ordering practice of individual companies are more significant than overall fluctuations in the small number of orders each year. Commissioned dress fabric orders printed by Turnbull & Stockdale Ltd. varied between 5 and 423 lumps, but the modal order was 30-50 (see Section 6.5.3.2 for design analysis of large orders).

5.4.4.3 Price Reduction Measures

The effect of the economic crash in 1929 was a fall in demand for the more expensive lines:

'It appears to be more and more emphatic that there is not money available for expenditure on very high priced furnishing.'

A reduction in the average price of their goods (from 7s a yard in 1929 to 4s in 1931) impelled James Morton to justify the resultant product quality. In February 1930, he commented in his address to shareholders that:

'We have to cater today for a world of much smaller things in decoration – more bread and cheese fare than big feasts. But we think that the bread and cheese can be as good or better for people than the big feasts if it is Good Stuff.'

The continuing competitive pressure on price is indicated by Marshall Fabrics advertising at the 1933 British Industries Fair:

'Buyers who are interested in dress and furnishing fabrics of good quality – especially those looking for "something different" at the lowest possible price – will find at our Stands a new conception altogether of "low priced serviceable fabrics."'

Analysis of a series of measures taken to reduce prices is given in Sections 5.4.4.3.1-3.

220 50 Years of Calico Printing, op. cit., p36.
222 GD 326/226: Address to Shareholders, September 1934.
223 Moon, K., op. cit.
5.4.4.3.1 Type of Fabric Used

A common strategy was to use cheaper fabrics: lighter weight fabrics and artificial silk fabrics and textile mixtures as alternatives to established natural cotton, linen and silk. This is seen in the advertisements of Ferguson Bros. Ltd.,224 the choice of fabrics in the Ferguson sample books (all voiles or lightweight artificial silks or mixtures, except the 1926-31 cotton book and the 1923 and 1932-41 Fancies books) and other contemporary advertising.225

5.4.4.3.2 Use of Dye

The steep rises in dye costs during the 1930s (Section 4.5.4) could affect design decisions, with greater use of white grounds and a reduction in the quantity of colours used in the general designs. The CPA developed a range of white ground prints with a small number of colours used, which were particularly evident in 1935-6 (see Figures 5.15-18). Comparison with designs in the 1931-4 Potter’s Pattern Book (Figures 5.20-21) and June 1934 designs in the Potter’s Engraving Book (Figure 5.17) shows a far greater dye coverage over the fabric (S9685 in Figure 5.19 is the most intensely covered in the Potter’s Engraving Book). The 1937 Potter’s Pattern Book has more dye coverage than the 1935-6 examples, and generally more than the Engraving Book designs, but has a mixture of export and home market styles, while the Engraving Book appears to be all home market. The fall in number of colours used in the Potter’s Engraving Book in 1935-6 (Figure 5.13) could be attributable to the high cost of dyes. A direct statement of the effect of dye supply was made in September/ October 1939, when the CPA reacted to the difficulties in obtaining colour by informing their freelance designers that ‘Print-on designs should not be more than 60% of surface colour and for discharge styles not more than 35-40% of roller colour should be used.’226 A reduction in the cost of dyes used at Ferguson Bros. Ltd. from 1932-6, at a time of rising dyestuff prices,

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224 DB 110/ 224 The Drapers’ Organiser advertisement c1928: ‘Juliette: this alluring fabric is so rich and soft that it is difficult to distinguish from Crêpe de Chine.’ 224 DB 110/ 224 advertisement c.1931: ‘Today, particularly, with the present feeling for economy, every woman wants to look more expensively dressed than she is. Frocks made in Ferguson’s Voile look worth double their cost. Give them a prominent showing and they’ll go far to keep a healthy complexion on your piece goods turnover.’ 225 Tootal Broadhurst Lee & Co. Ltd. advertising included the descriptions: ‘Lova . . . soft, resembling lightweight wool’ and ‘Lystav . . . tailors like linen. Supple as silk.’ Similar comparison with silk and presentation as a cheaper but still high quality material occurs in the advertisements by Harvey Nicholls: ‘Floral Matt Crêpe for summer gowns . . . a lovely and inexpensive solution to summer dress problems! The fascinating matt crêpe is made entirely of fine rayon, and is a little heavier than a soft crêpe de Chine — just right for the sweeping lines of new frocks and two-piece ensembles.’ Quoted (without dates) in Thirties Floral Fabric, V & A, Webb & Bower (Publishers) Ltd., 1988, pp8-9. 226 M75/ 1930-39/ 11.
could be attributable to less expensive dyes used, fewer colours or lower dye coverage, or a combination of these options. However, there is no evident difference in dye coverage, colours used or number of colours between the 1930-1 and 1933-4 voiles.

5.4.4.3.3 Production Process

A redirection of investment in new designs towards the least expensive processes was another policy adopted by the industry. Analysis of the production process chosen for new designs at Stead McAlpin Ltd. and Turnbull & Stockdale Ltd. is given in Figures 5.11 and 5.12. The Stead McAlpin analysis demonstrates the continuing dominance of engraved copper roller print as the bulk process used for commissioned printing. Block printing was used as a high quality alternative in the profitable years of the late 1920s, but was displaced by screen printing as the highest volume alternative process in the 1930s. The number of block print commissions was greatly reduced in the depression, from a peak of 37 in 1927 to two in 1931. Very low numbers continued through the 1930s, although ten new design commissions received in 1936 initiated a slight rise in the later years. Wooden roller prints only occurred in the early 1920s and the 1930s, with greatest popularity in 1936-7. All types of process were used simultaneously from 1933-40, the greater choice implying a more mixed market, with stronger competition in the various print processes. Turnbull & Stockdale Ltd. altered their practice in the processes used for new designs at the depression, reducing the block print production and initiating surface and screen printing between 1930 and 1933. The increase in number of new designs during the 1930s was mainly in screen prints, with some surface wooden roller prints between 1930 and 1933. This implies that an increased range of designs was put into production during the depression as a sales strategy, but using media that allowed a lower volume and cost of production for the new designs. The MSF block printing department was 'temporarily closed in August 1930 due to lack of demand, exacerbated by the development of cheaper surface printing by machinery'227 This statement is supported by the D3 block print design book of A. Morton & Co., which has the last design in July 1930.228 Block printing was evidently used again by 1935, since a letterhead of the American subsidiary advertised 'Cumberland Hand-Block Prints' and 'Sundour Unfadeable Decorative

227 Ibid.
228 Courtaulds Fabric plc. archive, London. Jocelyn Morton states that a small block print unit existed at MSF, set up in 1916 for printing in Sundour dyes: it is not clear whether this is a separate unit to the A. Morton & Co. production: Morton, J., op. cit., p220.
Fabrics. The possibility of particular design styles associated with use of the different processes is considered in Section 6.5.1.

Cost of engraving could have a direct effect on the number and type of designs put into production. In January 1925, the UTR Manchester and Glasgow Houses (orders offices) were cautioned to take as little engraving as possible. However, it was noted that: 'it is going to hamper business to some extent, especially in development of new styles at the moment and we can only hope that the restriction may be not for long.' The high engraving cost noted in 1936 could be the reason for the reduction in designs from 1934-8 in the CPA Engraving Book (Figure 5.13). However, there is an increase in the number of new designs roller printed at Stead McAlpin Ltd. in 1936.

An approach to reducing the cost of engraving was to buy engraving companies or establish in-house groups, to reduce costs: for example, the CPA bought The Engraved Roller Syndicate Ltd. in December 1921. Turnbull and Stockdale Ltd. prepared their own screens ('T & S Screen' or 'T & S' appears against engraver in the design books for screen prints, with notes of whether a permanent or temporary screen was made) and cut some of their block prints and surface rollers. An alternative strategy was to use a range of engraving companies, preventing charges rising above a market rate. For example, Turnbull & Stockdale Ltd. sub-contracted work to L.C. & Co., Howarth & Co, John Spencer, F. Todd & Co., Sun Engraving Co. and Mosedale during the 1930s.

The number of blocks or rollers could be used to modify the cost. A comparison with the number of colours in designs in the Potter's Engraving Book, and thus also of rollers engraved, shows a reduction in expenditure on multi-coloured designs in 1935 is compensated for by 4-coloured examples (Figure 5.13). This shows a minimisation of cost for similar styles of dress fabrics (since the proportion of floral design was 53% and 55% and

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229 GD 326/226.
230 UGD 13/5/6, 21-4/1/25 report on 'A' Department visit to Manchester.
231 M75/1922-28/2.4 It had been in loss since 1914, and did not show a profit until 1924.
232 This is likely to be Lockett Crosland & Co., a company listed as a Master Engravers' Association member. Howarth & Co, John Spencer and F. Todd & Co. were also members. M75/1921-29/19.6 FCP Minimum Price Committee, 3/6/26.
abstract was 46% and 45%: see Section 6.4.1), or a reaction to economics rather than fashion. There was also a reduction of the 4 or more colour designs in 1936.

The number of rollers per design and type of printing at MSF is shown in Figure 5.14. A transition in the type is indicated, with 2-4 colour duplex printing used in 1924-6 and revived in 1930, rather than the conventional 6-9 colour simplex printing. In duplex printing, both sides of the fabric were printed, but fewer copper rollers were required. This may be the 'Eitherway' roller print range designs (piece dyed fabrics, either overprinted with a single colour or discharge printed leaving a white pattern) referred to by Jocelyn Morton, as a cheap alternative developed in the early 1920s. In 1933, a range of single colour crash prints were produced, as well as an expansion in the 2 and 4-colour duplex (see Figure 5.14). MSF also developed a new range of cheaper fabrics in 'Sundour Speedwell Prints' in 1934, when they were suffering from severe price competition in the domestic market (Figure 6.123).

5.4.5 Marketing and Distribution

5.4.5.1 Changes in Distribution Practice

The CPA made a series of changes to their merchanting policy during the period, requiring changes in the structure of the company and the latitude of subsidiaries. In 1922, it was agreed that:

'Increased latitude should be allowed to existing merchant departments, so as to allow them to cover more ground. A policy of having two departments covering all important styles. All middlemen departments should be allowed to print up to 10% of their production outside the Association and have the power to carry stock and be free to sell up to 5% of their production in styles other than prints and to sell in all markets.'\(^{234}\)

The Management Committee expressed dissatisfaction with the result of the current trading policy in 1926.\(^{235}\) The problem of little direct touch with the markets, due to distribution through shippers, and the possibility of direct trading in the markets with the establishment of their own distributing houses was considered, in consultation with the market managers and some customers. The conclusions reached were:

'No direct trading in Markets hitherto served by Shippers. Push own cloth in Home Trade, Colonies and Europe, and job printing with closer relations with the Shippers in the other Markets. Endeavour to establish Marks, minimum qualities on which we will print our productions, intensify our campaign for fast colours and advertise in the Markets. Special travellers to sell the Association's prints only in Overseas Markets. As we are unable to distribute ourselves, we should endeavour to obtain a control at some point of distribution and enquires with this object in view are being made by representatives of the Association who have been sent to Rangoon and Persia as to the possibility of obtaining this in a Merchant's or Import House or native Shopkeeper.'\(^{236}\)

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\(^{234}\) M75/ Directors' Minute Book No. 7, 23/5/22.

\(^{235}\) M75/ Directors' Minute Book No. 10, 26/10/26. Particular concern was noted at the fall in the Association's percentage of the Board of Trade export Figureures, which for the five years prior to the war was 53%, and had dropped in 1926 to 45%.

\(^{236}\) Ibid.
A shipping company, S. Arning & Co. Ltd., was bought in May 1929 to cover their South American exports and to reduce distribution costs. Further discussion on the need for building up a distribution organisation was noted in September 1929, with the acquisition of a big merchant business suggested. Direct trading was also established on a trial basis in 1929:

'an experiment was being made of trading direct with Middlemen from the Works. . . . In this particular case, it was between Buckton Vale and Tootals for cretonne styles, a Salesman having been specially attached to the works.'

A new policy direction on distribution to the home market emerged in 1936-7, as discussed by Pitt. The loss of further home market wholesale business in 1936, in addition to the serious decline from 1930-36 (from £380,000 to £180,000) forced the Board to consider alternative approaches. An initial strategy adopted was to extend credit to several of the largest distributors, rather than buy distribution organisations or create formal partnerships. This appears to have assisted their export distribution, but not the home trade. A sub-committee to consider direct trading in the home market was established, which recommended (in April 1937) offering an experimental range of the highest quality dress goods to retailers, though eventually offering the whole range. With the emphasis on resale price maintenance, the margin allowed by the manufacturer for the retailer was a significant factor. Hollins fixed their minimum retail prices with a retailer's margin of 30-33% in 1933. The CPA allowed a retail margin of 28% on their direct sales operation in 1938, but later realised that this was ungenerous. Direct approaches from retailers were treated with suspicion, however: in November 1937, while the direct trading report was being produced, Marks & Spencer offered a direct contract of 1 million yards of printed fabric. The offer was received reluctantly, with doubts about the loss of profit and control in such a relationship, and only accepted subject to assurances given by Marks & Spencer to other making-up customers.

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238 M75/ Directors' Minute Book No. 12, 3/9/29.
239 Ibid., 18/6/29.
240 Pitt, S. op. cit., p137-140.
242 Pitt, S. op. cit., p139.
243 Ibid., p138: from minutes, 31/3/38.
MSF developed an additional line of cheaper goods to be distributed via wholesalers (see Section 5.4.5.3). Opening of retail showrooms (e.g. for Edinburgh Weavers) could also be a change in distribution practice, but a London showroom and policy of selling direct to retailers remained the central distribution approach taken. Changes in approach by the other case study companies appear to have been in marketing policy rather than distribution.

5.4.5.2 Marketing Policy

Ferguson Bros. Ltd. invested heavily in advertising to retailers and the fashion trade, with regular Drapers' Record and Drapers' Organiser cover advertisements, colour advertisements in BIF catalogues and additional sales material (diaries, showcards, fashion news booklets, leaflets), fabrics and model gowns for display supplied free. They also used trade fairs as a key publicity showcase, with a display of fabrics and frocks in the new fashion section of the 1931 Ideal Home Exhibition\(^{244}\) and an expenditure of £1,250/ year in the 1933-5 British Industries Fairs.\(^{245}\) Direct advertising to the consumer ran concurrently in a range of women’s magazines, including Weldon’s Ladies’ Journal, Fashions for All, Home Fashions, Mab’s Fashions, Vogue Pattern Book and Coming Fashions,\(^{246}\) sometimes funded as joint advertising campaigns with retail customers.\(^{247}\)

MSF had a similar policy of joint advertising in daily newspapers with retailers in the 1920s, in which co-operating retailers were supplied with layouts to attach their names.\(^{248}\) A new sales approach was introduced in 1936 at MSF by Mr Brackenridge (previously manager of the American subsidiary Morton Sundour Co. Inc.). A high profile, with the establishment of a new showroom (they were ‘almost the first among their competitors’ to move their London showrooms from the traditional City area to the West End\(^{249}\) and association with architectural or interior projects of significant cultural status (for example, in the 1937 Paris Exhibition: ‘many of the special fabrics for the British Pavilion were produced by Edinburgh

\(^{244}\) DB 110/224, Drapers' Organiser advertisement, March 1931.


\(^{246}\) Listed in c.1928 advertisement in The Drapers’ Organiser, DB 110/224.


\(^{248}\) Morton, J. op. cit., p286.

\(^{249}\) Ibid., p377.
Weavers. When the washable wallcloths were developed, James Morton visited a series of prominent architects, organisations (such as London Transport) and art galleries. Prestigious orders secured included the Savoy Hotel, the British Pavilion at the International Exhibition at New York and the Tate Gallery. A similar sales approach to the Ferguson Bros. strategy was recommended in the Osborne-Peacock report for MSF in 1940: trade press advertisements for the export markets targeted, public press and periodical advertising, trade circulars, sales aids for retail stores and special sales aids for co-operating stores. Particular Sundour ranges were selected as suitable for Australia and New Zealand, South Africa and South America (mainly Argentina), emphasising the lower ranges, not the most exclusive. The strategy was to link the fabrics to existing high-class retail stores (Myers Ltd. in Melbourne and Adelaide, David Jones Ltd. in Sydney, Auckland and New Zealand and Gath & Chaves (Harrods) in South America).

The CPA appear to have used relatively little direct advertising in the trade press, and to have concentrated on the Graftons furnishing fabrics when they did so (Figures 6.24-5). The CPA used mannequin parades to promote their dress fabrics to the home trade from 1928, but in 1932 the expense led them to be ‘restricted in future’. The parades were staged in retail stores around the country in late spring/early summer, requiring six troupes of mannequins in 1931. There was also heavy expenditure on trade fairs and international exhibitions, partly in fulfilment of their institutional role as a primary representative of the industry. For example, they gave a guarantee of £1,000 contributed exhibits and assisted in the production of a film on the cotton industry for the 1924 British Empire Exhibition (the guarantee was extended to 1925), and pledged a guarantee of £1,500 to the 1930 BIF Cotton Exhibition, as requested. Other exhibitions included the Vienna fair in 1925, the 1925 Paris

251 Ibid., p376.
252 GD 326/319 letters re. 1940 advertising campaign.
253 Ibid. The Draper for Australia and New Zealand, The Draper’s Organiser Export Number for Australia and New Zealand, for South Africa and for South America; and The South African Buyer.
254 GD 326/320
255 M75/Directors’ Minute Book No. 15, 19/9/33.
257 Guarantee noted in M75/ Director’s Minute Book No. 7, 25/10/21, and supported by similar agreements by the BA and BDA.
258 M75/ Directors’ Minute Book No. 13, 9/9/30.
259 It was reported ‘that Vienna Fair had proved very successful’ and had cost £200. M75/ Directors’ Minute Book No. 8, 7/10/24.

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International Arts Decoratifs exhibition\(^{260}\), the 1927 Leipzig exhibition arranged by DIA (see Section 5.1.3), other annual British Industries Fairs\(^{261}\) and the 1935 British Art in Industry Exhibition. Advertising for export included £644 for 15,000 Chinese Calenders, ordered in May 1921,\(^{262}\) an advertising campaign for Graftons branded goods in Java, costing £250, agreed in February 1925\(^{263}\) and a large advertising campaign contemplated for Australia in 1934/5.\(^{264}\)

No change in marketing or distribution practice of Turnbull & Stockdale Ltd. is evident, though the absence of minutes makes any such interpretation difficult. The London contact point for sales listed in the 1933-7 trade advertisements (Figure 6.117) was Roxburghe House in Regent Street: it is possible that this was a new, fashionable showroom, since Jocelyn Morton states that the traditional area was the City district. Additional publicity material (1933 booklet shown in Figure 6.118) was produced for retailers, to promote an image of accessible Modernist, British design. Fairly heavy investment in advertising is also shown in the BIF catalogues during the 1930s (with a transition from a plain text and logo format in 1933-4, emphasising the British provenance of the products, to domination of the advertisement by photographs of abstract textiles in 1935-6), but little from other sources. The annual British Industries Fairs were regularly attended by a wide range of manufacturing and print companies, acting as a key marketing event for the textile industry.

5.4.5.3 Advertising: Investment and Brand Identity

High expenditure on advertising to stimulate trade is evident at the start of the period (the CPA had an advertising budget for the Season in 1920/21 of £39,710 and of £30,000 for 1921/2\(^ {265} \)). Advertising was used to improve sales in economic downturns. For example, in February 1926, it was decided to advertise Cepea Fabrics by placing a full-page advertisement in the \textit{Daily Mail} and initiating a scheme of free gifts to purchasers of Cepea

\(^{260}\) The CPA subscribed £100 for rent of space. Ibid., 13/1/25.
\(^{261}\) Eight stands were taken in 1931, five in 1930. 'CPA Mannequin Parades', op. cit. In 1935 1 or 2 windows in the White City were agreed to be taken in addition, to advertise branded lines already before the public. M75/ Directors' Minute Book No. 17, 22/1/35.
\(^{262}\) M75/ Directors' Minute Book No. 7, 10/5/21.
\(^{263}\) M75/ Directors' Minute Book No. 8, 24/2/25.
\(^{264}\) M75/ Directors' Minute Book No. 10, 9/10/34.
\(^{265}\) M75/ Directors' Minute Book No. 6, 17/8/20 and No. 7, 23/8/21.
fabrics (funded from the advertising budget). A similar strategy is evident in the advertising of Ferguson Bros. Ltd. in 1930, with very high saturation advertising of full-page colour advertisements each month in trade journals and additional black and white advertisements in newspapers and the tailoring press. Increasing advertising also occurs in 1935, when price cutting in the home market was undermining profits. The CPA had an advertising budget of £30,000 in 1933/4 and 1934/5, of which only £18,559 was spent in 1933/4. The MSF Board approved an increased advertising expenditure on 31st July 1935, but in February 1936 stated that department profits were lower due to increased advertising costs, and that it was doubtful if they could continue to afford the £1,000 per year. They reduced their advertisements to half pages, and booked four in *Punch*.

The establishment of strong brand identities was a common strategy: the logo used would then be publicised by manufacturers, wholesalers and retailers (see O’Hanlon advertisement, Figure 2.3). Turnbull & Stockdale Ltd. used a logo of a hand-drawn rose as a company signifier (Figure 6.118), with the slogan ‘As English as the Rose’, emphasising a traditional national style of furnishing prints. The CPA retained the Grafton and Potter names as distinct brands, which would be sold in this way. ‘Cepea’ was used as a brand label for prints with guaranteed fast dyes from 1925. In September 1931, the CPA announced in the trade press that all fabrics merchant by the Association would be labelled ‘Cepea Fabrics’, with the guaranteed fast dyed prints marked with ‘Six Line Guarantee’ in addition.

MSF tied their Sundour brand name to a signified meaning of fast quality dyes, from the initial 1906-8 advertisements launching the brand, to the advertisements during the 1920s, to promote the Standfast prints. A new advertising campaign was initiated by Alastair Morton in 1935, with the appointment of Crawford’s advertising agency, led by Ashley Havinden as

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266 M75/ Directors’ Minute Book No. 9, 2/9/26.
267 The advertising account with London Press Exchange for 1930 was £5000, with extra funds for the tailoring press. DB 110/229 1928-37 Directors’ Minute Book, 21/11/29.
268 M75/ Director’s Minute Book No. 17, 9/10/34.
269 GD 326/ 268.
271 Registration of the brand for export was noted in M75/ Directors’ Minute Book No. 9, 24/11/25
273 This campaign was launched in 1923, with designs by Charles Paine and text by the Charles Hobson advertising company of Manchester, replaced by Fred Phillips of Baynard Press in the late 1920s. Morton. J. op. cit., pp280-6.
art director, resulting in Ashley’s ‘Sundour flower’ as a new brand logo/ identity. The promotion of Edinburgh Weavers as a high profile Modernist design company separated its branding from the more traditional image of Sundour. A similar strategy was the establishment of a separate Carlan brand, for lower quality wholesale goods: bulk wholesale trade for large retail distribution organisations 'should be developed to the advantage of Standfast but disassociated with Sundour. Ferguson Bros. Ltd. advertisements consistently emphasised the quality and innovation of the fabrics and the appeal to customers of their designs, projected in their final use as fashionable dress. The emphasis on fashionable dress in the presentation is shown in their advertisements (Figures 6.65-6, 68-70), a fashion parade in the 1935 British Industries Fair, Chanel sponsorship of particular fabric collections and the provision of model gowns for display to retailers.

274 Ibid., p412.
275 GD 326/ 228, 5/5/36. On 2nd June 1936, ‘Carlan Textiles Ltd.’ was registered as the name for the bulk wholesale trade.
276 DB 110/ 224, Drapers’ Organiser, March 1931: ‘Crepe Carlora: A lovely new fabric of the crepe-de-chine type with an intriguing weave that makes it positively ‘crush-proof. In fascinating patterns and lovely colourings, it makes up into delightful spring frocks.’; DB 110/ 224, 1935 BIF catalogue advertisement, ‘Carsella: Marocain will be the most popular material for dresses this season - and Carsella will take the honours. Ferguson - as a result of extensive experimental work – have evolved a special new marocain which not only looks the high class material that it is, but has a good woolly handle. Unlike so many marocains, Carsella by virtue of its exceptional design has overcome the ‘slipping’ defect.’.
278 Stated in advertisements in April 1933 and Special Spring Issue 1936 Drapers’ Record and 1939 Vogue.
5.4.6 Conclusion: Case-study Company Response

The proactive approach of Ferguson Bros. Ltd. is shown by the conversion of their processes from steam drive to electricity, investment in Ring Frames (a key debate over the decline of the British textile industry is the failure to switch to ring frames)279) and purchase of bookkeeping and Comptometer machines. Silesias for linings had been first made by Ferguson Bros. Ltd. in the 1820s,280 giving a background of innovation in textile development indicated by their manufacture of rayon from 1921 and production of new textile mixtures and finishes. The early use of screen printing and establishment of a screen-printing subsidiary (Eden Valley) also demonstrates an innovative approach. This approach is also shown in the high level of investment in design in 1921 and from 1923, maintained during the depression. Cost reduction measures include abstinence in fees and share bonuses by directors (Section 2.2.3), a pay cut to salaried staff suspension of the capital investment policy of the 1920s and policy changes in the type of fuel and dyestuff purchased (Chapter 4). Investment in conspicuous, almost saturation advertising in the trade press was a distinctive strategy, using couture fashion imagery to present their fabrics.

The CPA made drastic internal rationalisation changes, with the closure of the Scottish and many other works but overseas plant established. It also adopted a range of strategies, from diversification into silk printing and garment production, to investment in research (particularly in development of finishes and printing effects) and cautious changes in distribution. They seem to have taken a fairly entrepreneurial approach to design investment, as indicated by the high general level of designs registered, particularly in the 1920s, and the sharp increases in 1923, 1925, 1928 and 1933.

Active investigation of new opportunities and product development is shown at UTR, but mainly in following market demand closely and acting on the information, rather than


280 DB 110/ 224, 14/2/29 advertisement in *The Tailor and Cutter*: 'Silesias were first made and named by
initiating new products or existing structures. Examples of this commercial awareness were noted in Sections 5.4.1, 5.4.2.4 and 5.4.3.3 Diversification occurred in the chemical sales department, in the sales of soaps and other products.

MSF was highly entrepreneurial, in product development and diversification. Cost and price reduction policies were followed with production of cheaper lines for wholesale and in Sundour fabrics, in the reduction of rollers needed, the closure of the block print unit during the depression and minimisation of freelance design purchase. It is the only company to increase its design production during the depression, but this may be due to the transition in production process from block to roller print. However, the establishment of Edinburgh Weavers as a subsidiary emphasises their risk-taking approach to design, as well as product diversification.

The lack of minutes at Turnbull & Stockdale Ltd. curtails any assessment of entrepreneurial approach: the active interest in design (Chapter 6) and designer education (Chapter 3) of Captain William Turnbull, and the interest in structural reorganisation and concern at the cost implications of ‘short runs’ in the publication by Geoffrey Turnbull (from William Turnbull’s notes) are the main trends shown. Design investment is shown by the increase in new designs from 1930-6 and maintenance of this level in 1938-9, contrary to the general fall in design registration from 1930-3 and from 1938. No product diversification or development is evident, except for the adoption of screen printing. The use of screen printing rather than block printing for the increase in new designs indicates a cost reduction measure (see Section 5.4.4). The company appears to have increased their investment in advertising in the 1930s, with an emphasis on Modern design, quality and their British source.

Overall, the most vertically integrated companies (MSF and Ferguson Bros. Ltd.) show a high degree of innovation. Turnbull & Stockdale Ltd. appear to have the least entrepreneurial approach (in terms of diversification and product development), although the absence of minutes necessitates a tentative judgement. However, the increase in sales income from the

Ferguson Bros. Ltd. at Holme Head Works, nearly 100 years ago.
home market (Section 4.4.2) implies that for their own production, their design and distribution strategy was successful.

5.5 Conclusion: Response to Economic Crisis Chapter

Government intervention by imposition of import tariffs on home and colonial markets was highly effective in preventing the undermining of markets by severe price-cutting of competitor nations. The dye industry protection and dyestuff reparations added to costs, though a British dyestuff industry developed, producing high quality, fast to light, vat dyes. Vertical integration strategies were advocated in the 1920s inquiries, moving to a combination of protection and emphasis on design in the 1930s. A range of exhibitions were funded and co-ordinated, in co-operation with other cultural organisations, to promote good design, improve the domestic and international image of British products and stimulate orders.

There was a high level of organisation and political activism by the industry. The co-ordinated action by industry organisations in pricing policies, trade delegations and pressure on Government had a role in reducing the impact of economic conditions. However, the concentration on finding a solution to the problems based on a closed quota system was a misdirection of the need to rationalise production capacity that diverted attention from other approaches. The rejection of the final quota scheme proposed by industry and failure of industry to agree voluntary schemes prevented a structural resolution to the crisis based on overall reduction of production capacity. Combination and rationalisation of production facility occurred within companies and on a voluntary basis, but not to the degree intended, partly due to lack of funding. Vertical integration occurred in the establishment of new production facilities inside foreign tariff boundaries, while vertical co-operation established a range of schemes to improve national competitiveness in the export to particular markets or of specific products. A range of price agreements operated, to maintain the level of prices across the industry at an economic level and provide a system of structural disincentives to the trend for very small print orders. The industry as a whole took an entrepreneurial approach, as defined by Feinstein and Lazonick, in making a concerted effort to develop new
initiatives, including a readiness to make changes in the existing framework of markets, production and distribution to improve the conditions of the industry.

The negative view of entrepreneurial effectiveness in the interwar cotton industry by Lazonick, Garside and others is formed principally by a focus on the spinning and weaving sections. For example, Garside stated:

"All efforts to enforce price-fixing had failed, technological advance was virtually at a standstill, and cost-reducing improvements were conspicuously absent." 281

This was not the case in the manufacturing or printing companies examined. The case study companies demonstrated a highly entrepreneurial, risk-taking approach in responding to the interwar economic conditions, by a combination of strategies, including: diversification of product; product improvement and greater consumer choice in the textiles, dyes and finishes used; introduction of cheaper production techniques; investment in design; investment in advertising and adoption of new marketing approaches; consideration and testing of new distribution practices and structures. Analysis of the immediate response to the economic slump of 1930-2 indicates that the emphasis was on price reduction rather than cost reduction (the main response considered probable by Knight), though temporary salary and wage cuts were introduced by individual firms. Price reduction measures had specific effects on design. There were broad changes in the use of print processes, the number of colours and the degree of coverage used in designs, to make lower priced printed textiles available. Cost reduction measures appear to have been taken throughout the period, in response to rises in particular costs, such as dyes, fuel, etc. (see Chapter 4). Internal restructuring, the second response considered likely by Knight, was introduced by individual firms to some extent (the CPA and MSF), but not during the slump. Diversification and product development appear to have continued throughout the period, without any clear diminution or intensification during the slump. Pevsner's view of the greater risk-taking in design in response to the slump is not supported by any general increase in design investment. In general, design investment fell during the slump, though individual companies took a different approach (Ferguson Bros. Ltd. continued its level of design investment, MSF increased their investment in roller print

designs to a small extent). Specific analysis of design change as a response to the slump is discussed in Chapter 6. However, the intense competition and rising costs in 1934-6 was a more severe economic test for many printed textile companies, and in this circumstance a general increase in design investment (Figure 2.2) and emphasis on design in advertising is evident. Individual firms' approaches again varied, with a strong investment by the CPA in 1933, followed by a fall and lower level of recovery, while Ferguson reduced its investment in 1933-5 but increased it significantly in 1936-9. MSF adopted a strategy of greater investment in new designs in 1933-5, but with lower costs due to fewer colours used, as did Turnbull & Stockdale Ltd. (an increase in new designs from 1930-36, but reduction in process and sampling costs).
6. Design

6.1 Introduction

This chapter will analyse design evidence available, to assess how far there were similarities in style developments across the field of British printed textile design during the interwar period. It will examine whether there were structural divisions in design style and trends between furnishing or dress fabric sections of the industry, between markets, different fabric types or print processes. Sector response to macroeconomic developments will be investigated, with the suggestion by Pevsner that harsh economic conditions encourage a more innovative approach to design considered.\(^1\) The popularity of Modernist design within different consumer groups is discussed and the assertions of distinct class tastes in design style\(^2\) tested.

Evidence of any intentional policy in design by companies will be considered as well as empirical analysis of design style. The design records and sample books of case study companies will be analysed in detail, to establish the styles and design trends particular to each company. The degree to which each company operated a different company style or design approach, and thus had an endogenous pattern of stylistic change, can then be found. The theoretical views of company directors or designers (where known) and comments on design policy from company minutes or advertisements can be compared with the design trends apparent from company design records. The trends and policy of individual companies can then be placed within the contemporary debate on textile design, decoration and Modernist design principles.

On the basis of this analysis, issues of formation of taste can be applied. The clear difference in style and pattern of influence between dress and furnishing prints stated in the Balfour Committee Final Report of 1928 - that dress print designs were strongly influenced by or actually designed in Paris, while the main design centre and influence of furnishing textiles was Britain – is analysed.\(^3\) The source of the most innovative design,

\(^2\) Ibid.
\(^3\) Committee on Industry and Trade, *Survey of Textile Industries*, 1928, p352.
that determines style change, is considered: contemporary suggestions of the driving role of freelance painters and sculptors in initiating 'a new and contemporary style' are compared to the significance assigned to freelance textile designers by Christine Boydell and the role of studio design. The role of the managing director or chairman as a determining factor of design style and quality (vide Pevsner) can be assessed. The role of the studio in relation to freelance or subscription patterns for different companies may establish direction of influence and the innovative or conservative character of the company approach to design. From this, conclusions may be possible on whether individual companies or designers initiated or developed a new style. The design approach and significance of retailers in defining popular fashion and the accessibility and prominence of avant-garde design is also discussed.

The approach taken by different companies to broad movements in fashion is also significant. Companies may attempt to predict fashions, anticipating probable forms or motifs, within an established template of style types. Where a popular fashion did exist, initiated from an external event or a different media (such as animated films), the response of the companies will be considered. Did companies react to verifiable popular fashions by reproducing those signs unmodified or transform the trend in a creative way (perhaps using a company design style)? The impact of external stimuli - economic, structural or design-based (such as particular exhibitions) - is considered to determine whether there is a broadly similar effect on design in the case-study companies. The success of the intentions of improving popular and industrial taste (and promoting Modernist design) of those Government and cultural organisations arranging public design exhibitions can then be assessed.

The chapter is structured into seven sections. An introductory discussion of the DIA (a design reform organisation, which was a key focus of design ideas in the textile industry throughout the interwar period) in Section 6.2 is followed by a theoretical discussion of

6 Pevsner, N., op. cit., p183.
Modernism in relation to printed textiles (Section 6.3). This analysis includes a chronological analysis of the changing contemporary interpretations of British printed textile design in this period (Section 6.3.4). An analysis of trends in printed dress fabric design is then presented (Section 6.4.1), concentrating on the case-study companies producing dress fabrics (the CPA, Ferguson Bros. and the UTR) but also considering the merchant and production company dress fabric commissions printed by Turnbull & Stockdale Ltd. A similar section, analysing the design trends in furnishing fabrics, follows (Section 6.4.2). Trends indicated by the case study profiles will be compared to designs from a broad range of other print, manufacturing and merchant companies, sourced from commission print orders to Stead McAlpin Ltd. and Turnbull & Stockdale Ltd., Silver Studio designs, registered designs, and museum collections. The analysis of Arthur Sanderson & Sons Ltd. wallpaper designs (freelance and studio), given in Appendix 3, will also be used for comparison. Section 6.5 analyses the printed textile design presented in Section 6.4 by production method, material and market, with examination of design difference in source of designs (studio, freelance, international origin). Influence on design from company museums, designer mobility, exhibitions, media and retail is then considered (Section 6.6). In the final section (Section 6.7), particular styles, motifs and specialisations (such as nursery designs) are then analysed, considering their semiotic use and interpretation.
Inspired by the Werkbund exhibition in Cologne of 1914, a group of individuals concerned with industrial design created the DIA in 1915. The textile industry was represented by Frank Warner (managing director of Warner & Sons Ltd.) and James Morton (Chairman of Morton Sundour Fabrics Ltd.) as signatories of the initial memorandum to the Board of Trade in January 1915, while the original Council of the DIA included James Morton, William Foxton, Frank Warner and Charles Sixsmith (of Bentinck Cotton Mills). This domination by the textile industry continued in the early years, with Arthur Wilcock (director of Newman, Smith & Newman) also on the Council and Minnie McLeish (textile designer) on the Executive of the Council by 1917. Many printed textile and textile manufacturing companies joined the organisation: by 1917/18, the CPA, Know Mill Printing Co. Ltd., Simpson and Godlee Ltd., Newman, Smith & Newman Ltd., The UTR Co., W. O’Hanlon & Co. Ltd. (manufacturers and distributors), John Crompton (manufacturer of fancy cotton fabrics), P. Lloyd Rees (manufacturers and merchants), Tootal, Broadhurst & Lee Co. Ltd. (furnishing fabric manufacturers), Elson & Neill (velvet cotton mfr), George L. Craig (a woollen and worsted manufacturer) and A. L. Ireland (table linen manufacturer) had become members. Miss Muriel Barron, the assistant manager at the CPA who seems to have been responsible for making decisions on purchase of freelance design (she interviewed the Silver Studio representatives when they visited) was a personal member, as was S.L. Gill, a CPA deputy manager. During 1918-9, W. Turnbull (Turnbull & Stockdale Ltd.), and Sir Thomas Barlow (Barlow & Jones Ltd., cotton manufacturers) joined, with company memberships from J. & J. Baldwin & Partners (worsted spinners), British Quilting Co., Donald Brothers and John S. Brown & Sons (both linen manufacturers). In addition to manufacturing companies, individual designers, museum curators, art school principles and lecturers also joined (see Section 3.2.2). Co-operation of manufacturers, designers and distributors was a key aim of the DIA, and the active membership of export merchants and shippers, retailers, distributors and textile buyers was significant.

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7 1923-5 diary, Silver Studio Collection, Museum of Domestic Design and Architecture, Middlesex University.
8 GD 326/60/18, DIA List of Members to September 1927.
10 Merchants: G. & A. Walker, W. Maxwell Reekie and W.H. Zimmern (all in Manchester), C.L. Rutherston (Bradford), C.L. Snelson (Cheadle Hulme)
11 Alfred W. Simon.
Involvement with the production side is shown with the membership of individual printers and the Guild of Foremen Engravers to Calico Printers and Paper Stationers. By 1927, the dominance of the textile industry had fallen with a broadened DIA membership, though individual textile designers and Paton & Baldwin Ltd. (worsted spinners) had been added to the list. Later textile companies to join included R. Denby & Son, The Old Bleach Linen Co., Harold Sanderson (wallpaper and printed furnishing fabric manufacturer), Barlow & Jones and Goodworth Ltd.

The main activities of the DIA related to textiles were several key exhibitions (see Sections 6.3.4, 6.6.3) and numerous lectures and discussion meetings. For example, the national exhibition stand at the 1927 Leipzig International Exhibition was co-ordinated by the DIA. The Manchester Section, which included the Textiles Committee, was created to focus the design efforts of the industry.

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12 Fabric printers include: Drake Printing Co. Ltd., Leonard V. Gladwell, J. Nuttall, F. Roberts and John D. Sinclair (CPA).
13 GD 326/60, DIA Journal, March 1928 (Old Bleach Linen Co. Ltd.); March 1929 (Goodworth Ltd.); July 1930 (R. Denby & Son and Harold Sanderson).
14 Harry Peach, Minnie McLeish and Harry Trethowan (display manager at Heal & Son) co-ordinated and designed the British stand. This included fabric from Mortons, Foxtons, Donald Brothers and the CPA, as well as a broad range from the craft print (Barron and Larcher, Modern Textiles group of Footprints, Crysede, etc.) and weave workshops. Kirkham, P. Harry Peach, The Design Council, 1986, pp63-6.
6.3 Modernist Pattern Design

6.3.1 Theories of Modernism in British Art and Design

The key ideas underlying the understanding of Modernism in art were established in the pre-war period. The fundamental events for the British public in establishing this as a new movement were the two Post-Impressionist Exhibitions in 1910 and 1912 at the Grafton Galleries, the first of which focused particularly on the work of Cézanne, Van Gogh and Gauguin as the 'Old Masters of the movement', while the second gave Matisse and Picasso contemporary primacy, supported by a range of other Cubist and Fauvist artists. This approach to art was highly significant for printed textile design. Its central tenets were defined by Roger Fry, in the catalogue of the second exhibition as:

'The object of these artists ... [is] to express by pictorial and plastic form certain spiritual experiences ... It is an equivalence, not a likeness that is sought ... different groups are exploring the newly formed regions of expressive form.'

Clive Bell analysed aesthetics and gave the following definition of art in 1914:

'What quality is common to Sta. Sophia and the windows at Chartres, Mexican sculpture, a Persian bowl, Chinese carpets, Giotto's frescoes at Padua and the masterpieces of Poussin, Piero della Francesca and Cézanne? Only one answer seems possible - significant form. In each, lines and colours combined in a particular way, certain forms and relations of forms, stir our aesthetic emotions.'

The close association of British textile design with Modernist art is shown in the active role taken by textile industrialists in the patronage and promotion of avant-garde art in the interwar period. Samuel Courtauld bought French Impressionist and Post-Impressionist art before and after the first world war, including Van Gogh, Manet, Monet, Degas, Seurat and Cézanne, making his collection available to the public with long loans to the Tate and other galleries. In 1923 he gave £50,000 to the National Gallery for the purchase of similar paintings. He was also inspired by the paintings of the Italian Renaissance, but

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dismissive of British academic art. The closeness of his views to the Bell/ Fry strand of Modernist art criticism is indicated by his position as guarantor to the London Artists’ Association (established in May 1926 and dominated by Bloomsbury artists), which gave a subsidy to its members and arranged exhibitions of their work.\textsuperscript{19} In 1931 he created and endowed the Courtauld Institute of Art, provided it with his house in Portman Square and a substantial part of his collection. The Morton family were also keen supporters of art. James Morton was close friends with E.A. Taylor and Jessie M. King and, partly through their artistic contacts, bought considerable quantities of art —‘if he liked a painter or some other craftsman, he would as often as not buy at least half a dozen items’\textsuperscript{20} — including sculpture by Phyllis Bone, paintings by the Impressionist Ferdinand Maillaud, Jack Yeats, work by King, Taylor and others, a series of paintings by Robert Sivell and a portrait bust from Percy Portsmouth. He also commissioned architectural work from Sir Robert Lorimer, an active member of the DIA and close friend: a weaving shed and plans for a house in 1914, ‘Tuethur’ (house, boardroom and textile museum in Carlisle) and the renovation and alteration of ‘Craigiehall’ as a family home in c1926. Alastair Morton was closely involved with the Unit One group of Modernist painters, sculptors and architects (established in April 1934\textsuperscript{21}). He was able to support his friends Ben and Winifred Nicholson during the Depression by buying paintings and sculptures,\textsuperscript{22} purchased a number of Ben Nicholson reliefs, a Mondrian painting and a Barbara Hepworth sculpture during the 1930s and commissioned a house from the architect Leslie Martin in 1936. His own abstract paintings were published as postcards by the \textit{Circle} editors\textsuperscript{23} alongside works by Malevich, Van Doesburg and Lissitsky and were exhibited with the Constructivist artists in the 1939 ‘Living Art in England’ exhibition at the London Gallery.

\textsuperscript{20} Morton, J. op. cit., p322.
\textsuperscript{21} Its first exhibition was in April 1934 at the Mayor Gallery in London, which toured to Liverpool, Manchester, Hanley, Derby, Swansea and Belfast; followed by the ‘Abstract and Concrete’ exhibition in 1936, in which Continental artists such as Mondrian, Gabo, Calder, Miró, Moholy-Nagy and Léger with the British artists; an exhibition of Modern art at Minto House in Edinburgh in May 1937; and ‘Constructive Art’ in 1937 at the London Gallery.
\textsuperscript{23} \textit{Circle} was an ‘International Survey of Constructive Art’ published in 1937, edited by Naum Gabo, Ben Nicholson and Leslie Martin.
However, design theorists and practitioners had developed a different approach to Modernism. Many prominent British Modernist designers believed that Modernism was a practical approach that 'goes back to first principles to solve problems'.\textsuperscript{24} The 'fitness for use' slogan of the Design and Industries Association encapsulates this approach. It was given in their original 'Aims' booklet, published in August 1915:

'Sound design is not only an essential to technical excellence, but furthermore it tends towards economy in production: the first necessity of sound design is FITNESS FOR USE. Modern industrial methods, and the great possibilities in the machine, demand the best artistic no less than the best mechanical and scientific abilities.'\textsuperscript{25}

A similar approach was indicated in the version printed in 1927:

'Design is the devising of the form, construction and treatment of an object so as to fit it perfectly for its use, whether it is to be made by hand or machinery. The striving for fitness in the ship, the plough and the aeroplane has produced perfect examples of design, because those who make them, in aiming at efficiency, achieve both economy and beauty in the process.'\textsuperscript{26}

An ambivalence in its relation to Arts and Crafts Movement views on the importance of craft and acceptability of industrial production is evident in DIA pronouncements. The DIA included a range of approaches, from the Arts and Crafts view of the importance of joy in labour and superiority of hand craft of Lethaby to an emphasis on mass-produced goods by Harry Peach, who felt that 'craft production in the 1920s was a luxury that society could ill afford, if it meant ignoring industrial mass-production'.\textsuperscript{27} The relation to Arts and Crafts tenets by the Post-Impressionist grouping of Roger Fry is analysed by Stella Tillyard.\textsuperscript{28} The significance of hand craft as the direct expression of creativity, and as a superior form of production to industrial (in which mechanical perfection obliterated the natural beauty of the material, the 'nervous tremour of the creator' had disappeared, and intentions were purely commercial), was emphasised in the Omega Workshops

\textsuperscript{25} GD 326/ 60/ 1 DIA membership card.
\textsuperscript{26} GD 326/ 60/ 18, DIA List of Members to September 1927, p4.
\textsuperscript{27} Kirkham, P, (1987), op. cit., p68.
prospectus and other writings by Fry.\textsuperscript{29} However, industrial products (blanks from Poole Pottery, etc.) were used by the Post-Impressionist artists and sold by Omega.

A division in approach, between advocates of individual creativity and of rational types suitable for mass-production, also became evident in the Deutsche Werkbund, in a seminal debate in 1914.\textsuperscript{30} The division within the Werkbund crystallised in critical debate around the issue of function in fashion, exemplified in the comment by Alexander Elster that Germany must:

\begin{quote}
'decide between form as purely material functionality created for us alone or the capriccio of spiritual-psychological functionality in which the French and their fashion creators were previously superior.'\textsuperscript{31}
\end{quote}

The Deutsche Werkbund and the Wiener Werkstatte (Figures 6.4-7) were considered the key foreign centres of contemporary avant-garde design by British designers and industrialists in the construction of a new approach to design, during 1914-5 (see Sections 5.2.6 and 6.3.4). The Werkbund was part of a broader 'Sachkultur' approach, built on the analytical framework of key principles developed by the Arts and Crafts Movement, but predominantly emphasised the position of the 'designer within the industrial order . . subject to the rational demands of the production process and materials used.'\textsuperscript{32} This dichotomy in values between creativity and fitness for purpose emerged within the DIA in a debate on the nature and creation of beauty. The DIA assumption that fitness for purpose necessarily led to the creation of beauty (promoted especially by Lethaby, with his definition of art as 'the well-doing of what needs doing' and beauty as 'perfect fitness for a fine purpose\textsuperscript{33}) was increasingly questioned within the organisation. Debate was stimulated by a letter from T. Sturge Moore (a poet), published in the DIA Journal in 1917. He commented:

\begin{quote}
285
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{29} Tillyard, S.K., op. cit., pp51, 60-62: from Fry, R. 'Art and Commerce', 1926.


‘I think there is growing up a new orthodoxy which substitutes worthy work for beauty and fitness for fancy and tidiness for imagination. Suitability must not be called beauty any more than a worthy matron be called Venus – it isn’t kind to her.’

James Morton’s support for this view is shown by his copy of the Journal, in which he wrote ‘True! Bravo!’ by this statement.

A consensus of similar views are evident in The Conquest of Ugliness, a collection of essays published in 1935, following the Royal Academy British Art in Industry exhibition, by organisers, exhibitors and others. Betty Joel commented:

‘A great deal too much is talked about functionalism. Of course things must function. Only very horrid people would try to sell one things that did not do the job that they were held out to perform. But once an object has been suited to its intended use, it need not in addition ‘look as if it functioned’ – which is what our theorists mean, when they talk of functionalism. • Can we not therefore shed all this cant about functionalism and simply agree that once a thing is made so that it really fulfils its function, it should be allowed to look as lovely as can be?,

while H.S. Goodhart-Rendell, vice-president of the RIBA, wrote that:

‘A new sentimental Puritanism has swept over Europe, and has made suspect all art that is anything more than either the skilful manufacture of useful things or the mere means of projecting something from the artist’s personality that he thinks the world would be the better for admiring. • Austerity, however, is not abstinence, nor simplicity nakedness. • Usefulness alone is a dreary end to man’s labour, be his instruments old tools or new machines.

6.3.2 Decoration and Modernism

Opposition to ornament was proclaimed by many leading early theorists of Modernist design, from the association of ornament with low levels of culture and the criminality of scrawled graffiti by Adolf Loos:

24 GD 326/ 60/ 7 DIA Journal, December 1917.
25 Ibid.
'No ornament can any longer be made today by anyone who lives on our cultural level... anyone who goes to the Ninth Symphony and then sits down and designs a wallpaper pattern is either a confidence trickster or a degenerate.'\textsuperscript{39}

to DIA commentators such as Clutton Brock:

'If only they (the public) could be persuaded that plain things are the most beautiful, they would soon see for themselves that they are far more beautiful than most of the ornamented things, from fire-irons up to grand hotels, with which their taste has been depraved.'\textsuperscript{40}

An extreme version of the Modernist emphasis on purity of form is shown by Corbusier in his announcement that 'decoration is no longer possible' and acid comments on contemporary interior design in 1925, in which he declares of the 'symphony of colours and materials that is the triumph of the decorative ensemble' that 'such stuff founders in a narcotic haze'.\textsuperscript{41} A significant step in the establishment of this as a tenet of Modernism was an exhibition of the Deutsche Werkbund in 1924, entitled 'Die Form Ohne Ornament' - form without ornament. The prejudice against ornament was indicated by Goodhart-Rendell in 1935:

'A fondness for ornament is no more readily acknowledged by refined persons than would be a fondness for gin, and the natural appetite of the unrefined for pretty patterns is represented as a weakness requiring drastic methods of cure.'\textsuperscript{42}

He considered that the extent of this view was sufficiently ingrained as to constitute a generational difference in taste:

'Austerity is robbing exuberance of its former emotional appeal; a new generation 'reacts' (as it would say) to bare walls in the way the generation before it responded to rosebuds.'\textsuperscript{43}

The obscurity of two-dimensional decoration within Modernist design discourse, compared to the problematic status of three-dimensional ornament is indicated by Richards' comment in 1940, that modern buildings 'are not enriched by ornament because

\textsuperscript{40} Clutton Brock, A. 'A modern creed of work', DIA pamphlet, 1916: quoted in Unit 19, OU, 1975.
\textsuperscript{41} Le Corbusier, The Decorative Art of Today, first published by Editions Cres, Paris, 1925.
\textsuperscript{42} Goodhart-Rendel, H.S., op. cit., p33.
their parts are made by machines, and applied ornament is not the machine's method of beautification, not because we have not succeeded in thinking out a modern style of ornament'.\textsuperscript{44} The contradictory position of patterned textile design within Modernist interiors has been recognised by Christine Boydell, with a role for isolated areas of pattern such as rugs suggested as a focus of the plain Modernist interior.\textsuperscript{45}

However, a positive view of decoration was also available. The usage of 'decoration' as connoting emotional expression, fine art status and quality among Arts and Crafts writers (particularly for amateur handicraft makers) was adopted by Roger Fry in the Edwardian period.\textsuperscript{46} It was thus used as a synonym for the formal qualities of art and two-dimensional design at this time. This interpretation of decoration - an acceptance of the expressive formal qualities of two-dimensional pattern design - appears to have remained among Modernist artists and consumers. Alastair Morton was using this conceptual approach when he introduced the 1938 Edinburgh Weavers Constructivist Fabrics range to buyers: 'The second major style genuine to modern interior decoration we considered to be one based on pure shapes and colours'\textsuperscript{47}

A distinctively Modernist pattern design did evolve concurrently with the canon of accepted Modernist architecture and furniture design. A simplification of pattern designs to flat shapes (inspired by Arts and Crafts principles) had been established by Voysey, M.H. Baillie-Scott and Art Nouveau designers such as Harry Silver and Hector Guimard. Similar abstract patterning and formalised motifs occur c1901-12 in the designs of the Glasgow Four in Scotland and early Wiener Werkstatte, due to the influence of the Glasgow group in Vienna. The fashion for abstract pattern was promoted by the Die Ausstellung Munchen exhibition in 1910. Bauhaus theory on the Preliminary Course produced experiments in abstract pattern design, with mass-production of Bauhaus

\textsuperscript{44} Ibid., p34.
\textsuperscript{47} Tillyard, S.K. op. cit., pp27-8 and 51-2.
wallpaper, printed fabric and weave designs. Katharina Metz, in the catalogue of the Kunstsammlungen Chemnitz, gives priority to van de Velde and the Bauhaus in defining Modernist formal design (in ‘diametrical opposition’ to the 1925 Paris Exhibition), although the ‘marked abstraction’ and ‘strong tendency to geometric patterns’ of Hoffmann and Wiener Werkstatte textile design is approved. The textile and wallpaper design of the Wiener Werkstatte in the interwar period has been researched by Angela Völker and Jane Kallir. It was not accepted within the contemporary Modernist project by Armand Weiser and Adolf Loos, but was publicised in the Architectural Review and noted by Pevsner. The first exhibition of the DIA to include textiles was the room taken in the 1916 Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society show at Burlington House. This gave fabrics designed for the African market a prominent place within the construction of DIA ‘good design’, receiving a favourable press reaction.

The influence of Expressionism as an art movement on fashion design, graphics and the other applied arts was commented on by German critics from 1914, with a final comment on its impact on decorative art in 1921 by Wilhelm Worringer:

‘From the whole effort, only a new decorative, very attractive and stimulating swirl remains in the calligraphy of fashion.’

The significance of Expressionist fashion to the new movement in art and design became evident with the May 1914 Deutsche Werkbund exhibition in Cologne. Its acceptance and political role as a signifier of German independence from Parisian cultural domination was demonstrated by the Werkbund fashion show in the Prussian House of Representatives in

48 Three pattern books of purely textural coloured wallpaper were designed by the mural painting department and produced between 1929 and 1932 by Rasch Brothers & Co.; printed curtains and tablecloths were produced by M. van Delden & Co in 1931-2; and woven prototypes were supplied to industrial mills throughout 1928-32 and mass-produced under the label 'Bauhausstoffe'.
51 Prejudice against the female domination of the Wiener Werkstatte design exhibited in the Austrian Pavilion at the 1925 Paris Art Deco exhibition by Armand Weiser is discussed in Kallir, J., ibid. Hostility by Loos to the Werkstatte is examined in Vergo, P. Art in Vienna, 1898-1918, Phaidon Press Ltd., 1981, pp162-
53 He considered the Salubra wallpapers, many designed by Wiener Werkstatte designers, and German NDK wallpapers were considered the best wallpaper designs available. Pevsner, N. (1937), op. cit., p70.
54 'Special praise was given by a number of journals to the cotton fabrics in high colours made by Bentinck Mills for the West African trade.' Pevsner, N. 'History of the DIA', DIA Jubilee Yearbook, 1975, p42.
March 1915 and the various exhibitions and propaganda efforts in Switzerland in 1917, which culminated in a Fashion Week in Berne. The significance of dress fabric design as a prominent vehicle of Expressionism was seen particularly in the Wiener Werkstatte block and linoleum printed designs, published as *Mode Wien* portfolios in 1914/5 (Figures 6.6-7); the 1913-9 printed fabric design of the Omega Workshops (Figures 6.10-11); the Wiener Werkstatte’s fashion department; the Berlin fashion house of Alfred-Marie and Poiret’s Atelier Martine (a group of untrained young girls led by the Fauvist painter and designer Raoul Dufy, with the intention of developing an unconventional approach: Figure 6.8-9). The emphasis on intense colours prompted by the Ballets Russes stage designs of Leon Bakst and Alexandre Benois in 1909-10 (Figure 6.1-2) was adapted to dress fashion by Poiret (Figure 6.3) and other leading couturiers and underlined by the Post-Impressionist art approach to decorative design of the Omega Workshops. The inclusion of African fabrics with their own designs for sale at the Omega Workshops, and the exhibition of children’s art in 1919, emphasises the interest in formally expressive art\(^56\) (the Parisian avant-garde were interested in similar sources). During the interwar period, an art-based expressive approach is evident in the ‘wild-looking’ designs of Minnie McLeish\(^57\), the use of crudely cut wood block prints in the craft workshops of art school graduates and the trend for expressive brushstrokes shown in of Alec Walker in Crysede Ltd. dress silk prints (Figure 6.169-70), Ferguson Bros. Ltd. printed cottons (Figures 6.93-102), Duncan Grant (Figure 6.207) and other screen print designs of the 1930s. The dynamism of abstract mass-produced fabrics by W. Foxton Ltd., F.W. Grafton & Co. (a subsidiary of the CPA) and Sefton & Co. Ltd. in 1918-22 was also shown in French pattern design of the 1925 Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes exhibition (Figures 6.14-7). This type of design was characterised as ‘moderne’ rather than Modernist in France, due to the success of the Munich Secession design in the 1910 Salon d’Automne and Brussels International Exhibition, which resulted in a

\(^{55}\) Worringen, W. *Künstlerische Zeitfragen*, Munich, 1921, quoted in Simmons, S, op. cit.

\(^{56}\) Tillyard, S.K., op. cit., p66. The ‘African fabrics’ are likely to have been fabrics produced in Britain for the African market. Quentin Bell described the signifiers of Bloomsbury interiors of the 1920s as: ‘rooms made for ease rather than show, on the walls of which hung the spoils of more adventurous years, fauve and cubist pictures…; Negro and Chinese sculpture, tiled tables and cottons made for the African trade, shabby comfortable furniture, big Spanish or Italian pots…, books in perpetual disorder, a gramophone’ Bell, Q. *Bloomsbury*, Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 1968, p100.

\(^{57}\) Instruction of James Morton to the studio to ‘Keep the same bright brilliant colours and the same wild-looking character in the design. Don’t trim and civilise it any more than is necessary for the interpretation on design paper.’ Quoted in Morton, J. *Three Generations in a Family Textile Firm*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1971, p287.
association of Modernist design as German and unpatriotic. However, a reliance on ensembliers to create stylistic cohesion indicates a similarity to the idea of a total work of art that integrated art, architecture and design (gesamtkunstwerk), common to much avant-garde design of Austria and Germany.

6.3.3 Modernism and Fashion

The relation of Modernism to fashion is contradictory: as an expression of modernity, Modernist design must be evidently innovative and of its period, in its use of materials, techniques and form. However, suspicion of any suggestion of design as a fashion or style was widespread. J.M. Richards explained that, although 'it was natural for the man in the street to see in the new architecture only another bewildering addition to the variety of architectural styles already offered him', Modernism is not a fashionable style of jazz ornament, or the custom of building in concrete or with flat roofs and horizontal window panes, but the honest product of science and art, concerned with real needs. This distinction between Modernist and modernistic was emphasised by Philip Johnson, in an American radio talk in 1935:

‘to use the modern style means to use the technical achievements of our age. It means using the new materials and new ways of construction that have been developed in recent years. It also means to study changes in our way of living and in our taste.’

Modernistic design was defined as 'just an attempt to disguise old principles with a new surface treatment. For example, a modernistic chair is simply an old chair that tries to look modern. Curves are replaced by freakish angles. Geometric zigzags or cubistic designs are used in its upholstery patterns, but in principle it is nothing but an old chair carrying a new burden of ornament.'

There was a contrast in approaches in the DIA between the enthusiasm for all aspects of 'progressive' Continental design of Minnie McLeish and a disapproval of stylistic

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geometric excess of 'the squares and zig-zags and wiggle-waggle of foreign fads' by Peach.\textsuperscript{61} By 1929, Lethaby had become sceptical of Continental Modernist design, considering it merely another style rather than a result of good design principles and referring to it as 'ye olde modernist style' in a letter to Harry Peach.\textsuperscript{62} DIA member Noel Carrington showed a similar approach, in his definition of the difference between Modernist and modernistic interior design. He viewed modernistic design as based on uncontained avant-garde experimentalism, lacking any functional rationalisation:

'a style of sorts, compounded largely of studied unconventionalism, flavoured in this instance with a dash of Cubism. Such interiors are as unrelated to function and construction as the Tudor reproductions of the big shops.'\textsuperscript{63}

However, in 1930, an editorial of the Studio Yearbook elided Modernist design and fashion, implicitly recognising the popularity of Modernist design:

'...Fashion...it is the Fashion of the age to be Rational.'\textsuperscript{64}

This echoes the fears of Adolf Loos, who had crusaded against Modernist design becoming only another applied style, as Art Nouveau had become.\textsuperscript{65}

The relation of modernity to Modernism has been discussed by Habermas, Calinescu, Berman, Pippin and others.\textsuperscript{66} Modernity is discussed as a condition of urban, industrialised life, in which the depersonalised social relations of a mass society cause disorientation and nihilist alienation. Baudelaire defined modernity as 'the ephemeral, the fleeting, the contingent'.\textsuperscript{67} The contemporary art movement of Impressionism, in which an instant of vision and perception is recorded, is seen as the decisive break from pre-Modern art by
Pippin. Impressionism shows a pre-occupation with modernity: ‘a reality accessible only in contingent, individual moments of representation’ and in ‘these dabs of paint’, which ‘are all there is.’ Habermas links 'a modernity that has been evaporated into what is actual at any given time' with Modernism, which privileges the present, or the 'authenticity of a now-time' as the crucial reference of any art-work. As modernity becomes the normative state, there is an implicit imperative that art ought to be modern. Thus a Modernist artefact should look modern as well be produced in a modern way that accepts the industrial artefact of contemporary civilisation. The Modernist object uses its aesthetic principles as a strategy to differentiate itself emphatically from previous temporal periods by the display of particular stylistic attributes. There is an ironic contradiction, in that Modernism has an inherently progressive nature, aiming always to create original works, yet within a defined framework of design and aesthetic principles. This results in a necessity for transformations of the form and meaning of what is modern, in order for any progression to be possible, and thus activates a progression of styles. The contingency of modernity binds it closely to fashion, while Modernism denies any connection with either fashion or style.

The Modernist style and approach to design was believed to be the expression of the new age: as the 'genuine' expression of contemporary identity, it invalidated all other stylistic forms as either false or irrelevant. It was promulgated with a moral fervour, which identified Modernist style with quality in design, and the aesthetic quality of consumer products as having a significant effect on the ethical values of their users. This attitude was demonstrated by Pevsner in his survey of British industrial production: 'Unless a rigid standard of quality and style - which is, as I shall be showing later, almost the same - is set up and ruthlessly maintained, no success of real consequence is possible.' Although not all leaders or centres of cultural authority were Modernist, there was a barrage of recrimination for dissidents. The Royal Academy was attacked for its non-ideological stance in the jurying of their 1935 'British Art in Industry' exhibition, in which 'design

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68 Pippin, R. op. cit.
69 Ibid., p36-7.
70 Benjamin, quoted in Habermas, J. op. cit.
71 Pevsner, N. (1937), op. cit.
72 Examples of the critical contemporary response are the letters to The Times by Frank Pick (9/2/35) and Paul Nash (18/2/35), journal article by Herbert Read (Architectural Review, 1935) and criticism of Mr de la Valette's views (the Organizing Secretary) in Pevsner, N. ibid., pp164-9. Also discussed in Gloag, J.
could be traditional or modern, if it is original'.\footnote{73} By 1938, it was possible for Noel Carrington to attribute a fascist, reactionary aspect to non-acceptance of the Modernist design approach:

‘The Paris Exhibition of last year revealed a world in which, except for a few reactionary tendencies inspired by political forces, the use of contemporary materials in a logical manner has been generally accepted.'\footnote{74}

His opinion of historicist styles had become extreme, stating that ‘Antique collecting, ‘period’ furnishing and all such sentimentalism is mere infantile regression.’\footnote{75}

\section*{6.3.4 Chronological Developments in Design Theory of the British Textile Industry}

The early domination of the DIA by the textile industry and broad acceptance of DIA philosophy indicated by textile industry membership (Section 6.2.1) indicates the interest in design issues taken. An active public role was undertaken by the managing directors of leading textile production and print companies, as well as by individual freelance designers and retailers.

Considerable debate on textile design occurred within the DIA in 1918-19, in the build-up to the May-June 1919 Manchester Exhibition. Intense debate on the need for pattern design and the value of export market printed fabrics as design quality is given within the DIA Journal. For example, in a debate on the 18\textsuperscript{th} July 1918 entitled ‘Is the Designer Indispensable?’, Mr Wilcock (director of Newman, Smith & Newman, a furnishing textile company) stated that:

‘The constructive designer was indispensable, but the designer of patterns was unnecessary; an entire abstention from pattern was desirable because pattern led to vicious excess.’\footnote{76}

\footnote{Industrial Art Explained, George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1934 and Powers, A. ‘Oliver Hill as Exhibition Designer’, \textit{The Thirties Society Journal}, No. 7, pp34-5.}
\footnote{73 Stated at the inaugural meeting of the Advisory Committee, 8 November 1933, by the President of the Royal Academy.}
\footnote{74 Carrington, N. \textit{Design and Decoration in the Home}, Country Life Ltd., 1938, p5.}
\footnote{75 Ibid., p13.}
\footnote{76 GD 325/ 60/12, \textit{DIA Journal}, Oct. 1918.}
Mr Foxton agreed that

'too much pattern was distributed, yet was sure that a pattern-less world, such as Mr Wilcock aspired to, would be intolerable. The excess of pattern produced was largely caused by the public's craving to be conspicuous and exclusive. It would be preferable, of course, to have fewer and better designs.'\(^\text{77}\)

At a second meeting on the 1\(^{st}\) August, these ideas were debated further under the title 'The Inevitability of Pattern Design'. Mr Hall Thorpe remarked 'Is not life more worth living because of the joyous and rhythmic note introduced by pattern?'\(^\text{78}\)

It was found that when textiles were requested from companies for the exhibition, furnishing fabrics of ornate style and high price were donated. Only a small number were considered to be of DIA standard. However, when the Textile Sub-Committee decided to visit warehouses themselves, they were overwhelmed by the richness and variety of good design available.\(^\text{79}\) Dress fabrics, export market fabrics (particularly West African) and simple woven fabrics were collected as well as furnishing prints. The application of 'fitness to purpose' to printed textile design by the DIA was demonstrated in the selection methods for the exhibition. A variety of points were considered by the Selection Committee, such as whether colours look well in natural and artificial light; if designs look well at a distance as well as close to; whether the drawing is lost when the fabric is hung in folds; and whether colour is an integral part of the design, as it is in painting, not mere surface decoration or an afterthought.\(^\text{80}\) This exhibition was extremely successful, extended from three to five weeks and attended by 25,660 visitors.

Specific comments on decoration by DIA members are rare, but an address by Harold Curwen, supporting an exhibition of printing by the DIA at Derby in May 1919, indicates a similar aesthetic approach as Fry (see above):

'For purely decorative purposes, do not attempt to reproduce but rather receive inspiration from the subject and endeavour to convey the spirit of the model. As for instance, in making a decorative representation of flowers, do not attempt to give

\(^{77}\) Ibid.
\(^{78}\) GD 325/ 60/ 15, *DIA Journal*, Summer 1919.
\(^{79}\) Ibid.
all the modelling and fine texture, but rather get the essential gay cheerfulness into the design in a broad way.\textsuperscript{81}

The existence of a demand for novelties at this time is confirmed by A.E.G. Brookes in 1919: 'The return of men from War service to the industry has created a demand for new things, and a greater necessity for fresh ideas and live design which should go a long way to develop better taste in fabrics through the medium of trade.'\textsuperscript{82}

An emphasis on period and colour is evident in the advice on domestic interior decoration by John Gloag, published in 1922.\textsuperscript{83} He recommended plain coloured fabric rather than patterned, as providing dignity, restfulness and harmony: cretonne and printed linen are useful only when an air of fresh brightness is desirable for a bedroom scheme.\textsuperscript{84} An example (indicating the stress on contemporary colour rather than period reproduction) is given of a bedroom scheme for a room with Chippendale, Sheraton and Hepplewhite furniture.\textsuperscript{85} The dark colours of the mahogany (and one walnut piece) furniture are placed within buff walls, with a carpet of soft purple hue on polished black floor boards, a matching purple bedcover and stool upholstery and pale green fabric patterned in rose and purple for the window, bed and cabinet and easy chair upholstery. By January 1923, the general transition back to revival styles was evident:

'In this country, the violence of jazz fashions in fabrics has exhausted itself, and the great wave in taste for haphazard and jigsaw splashes and patches of intense colour has frothed down to the merest ripple; patterns are coming back, and designers are seeking their inspiration largely from traditional sources, and this phase has been produced by a partial revival of the taste for period decoration.'\textsuperscript{86}

However, an outstanding feature of cretonnes was the colours, described as vivid or bright, in the window displays of furnishing retailers.\textsuperscript{87}

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<td>Brookes, A.E.G. 'Textiles: Design and Technology', DIA Journal, Summer 1919, p19: GD 326/ 60/ 15.</td>
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<td>Gloag, J. Simple Schemes for Decoration, Duckworth &amp; Co., 1922.</td>
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The 1925 Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes

Designs shown at the 1925 Exhibition were required to be of 'modern inspiration and of genuine originality ... Copies, imitations and counterfeits of antique styles are rigorously excluded'.88 However, the British furnishing fabrics appeared traditional in style in contrast with the French designs, as noted in a contemporary review:

'On the whole there was little originality compared to the French textiles. Although the designs of Morris were still popular, chintz and cretonnes with naturalistic flower patterns or ones derived from Elizabethan embroideries reigned supreme.'89

The type of British fabrics shown may have been due to the general lack of enthusiasm by British companies. The Federation of Calico Printers wrote to express this in July 1924:

'The secretary is instructed to inform the FBI Industrial Art Committee that the Federation is not inclined to co-operate in regard to the above mentioned Exhibition, nor did there seem any prospect of individual firms doing so.'90

The marketing of the industry was orientated around regular trade exhibitions, such as the Vienna Fair and British Industries Fair: investing in highly expensive consumer exhibitions was seen as of doubtful advantage.91 In addition, the cost of industry investment in the 1924-5 British Empire Exhibition may have reduced the probability of investment in another major exhibition.92 The cotton textiles exhibit at the 1924 Empire Exhibition had an educational emphasis on telling 'the whole story of cotton', with displays of machinery and a film showing manufacturing processes. At the point when some companies decided to take part in the 1925 Paris Exhibition, there was little time available for preparation, particularly with the very different emphasis on design of 'modern inspiration'.

90 B14/ 6/ 2/ 1 FCP minute book, 8/8/24.
91 The annual cost of the Vienna Fair was £200. M75/ Directors’ Minute Book No. 8, 11/3/24 and 7/10/24.
92 'The expense to the Association would be £6-7,000' if the CPA had exhibited separately. M75/ Directors’ Minute Book No. 7, 6/2/23. They agreed to guarantee the exhibition, but the industry was represented by an FCP display.
However, although the general impression of British design was traditional, there were some Modernist textiles exhibited: Warner's 'Peterson', designed in 1925, was a Modernist floral, while the 1923 'Marble' damask was described by the judges as 'frankly modern and original'. Sir Frank Warner, who was appointed as Chairman of the British textile section, defended in his official report the 'disinclination of the British manufacturer to break with the past' by emphasising the lasting qualities of a high quality craft product, commenting that 'the longer an article is required to last, the less insistent is the call for novelty'. An investigation by Captain William Turnbull (of Turnbull and Stockdale Ltd.) of 'Modern Art Tendencies' in France, Germany and Austria for the Industrial Art Committee of the Federation of Calico Printers demonstrates a more extensive interpretation of the 1925 exhibition. This reaction to the 1925 International Exhibition indicates that Modernist design was a recognised type in Britain, but thought to be a small-scale phenomenon in the market. He wrote:

'The Modern Style has permeated Industrial Europe and England certainly cannot afford to ignore the movement. The French expression of it is, I think, too bizarre and too chaotic to satisfy English taste for long. The German and Austrian, on the other hand, is in advance of the French, is traditional in spirit though not in form, and points the way of reasonable development.'

More detailed comments included:

'The impression made on me by the form the Modern Style took as seen in the French work, was that though curiously intriguing and stimulating, it was unrestful, ungraceful, and for the most part unpleasant. Having said which I must add that its cleverness is really astonishing, and its decorative value undeniable when used in a wholly modern decorative scheme. Colour they have handled in a unique and masterly manner. They have discarded tradition and thrown overboard all the rules which we are at pains to teach our young people. The result, dislike it though we may, is work of an imaginative and individual character. In examining the examples to be found in the shops (in Munich) and particularly the Deutche Werkstatte, there was a dignity and austerity about them which was lacking in most of the French stuff. And whatever else they had sacrificed for modernity, they had not sacrificed good drawing. In Vienna I found the Austrian version of the Modern Style much in advance of anything I had so far come across, and on the whole very usable and pleasant. The best things were found in the Wiener Werkstatte. In general, their designs differed from the French by reason of the

94 Bury, H. op. cit., p57.
importance they attach to good drawing, and also because although their forms are new, their practice was based on traditional methods.'

How much direct influence this report had is unknown, but certainly key designers from the Deutche and Wiener Werkstatte (praised by Turnbull) were employed in freelance and studio furnishing design. Prof. Ernst Aufseeser had freelance designs accepted at Turnbull & Stockdale Ltd. and Warner & Sons Ltd. on his arrival in Britain from Germany and Miss Eva Aufseeser (a daughter?) had designs bought by Warners and Sandersons. Mea Angerer, a Wiener Werkstatte designer, was appointed head designer at Eton Rural Fabrics in 1928 at a much higher salary than was common at the company (see Section 3.6.1).

Following the 1925 exhibition, the Modernists tended to take a very depressed view of the quality of textile design available in Britain, assuming that all significant design developments were occurring on the Continent. Basil Ionides commented in 1926 that:

',..in England the creative spirit is left to be imported, and the makers content themselves with the steady favourites of the past, some originally designed as chintzes and prints and some originally as papers, damasks, brocades and needlework, but now adapted to chintz and cretonne designs'.

In spite of this, he did pick out some prints by Heals and Turnbull and Stockdale Ltd. as 'worthy of note as they are what are now considered modern.' It seems likely that he is only considering furnishing fabrics, since he refers to chintz and cretonne fabrics. The popular dress prints produced by the CPA and Ferguson Bros. Ltd. rarely used revival sources. The focus of Modernist commentators on architecture as the primary design form appears to have restricted the field of textiles usually discussed to furnishing fabrics, since these fabrics were considered as an aspect of interior design. This viewpoint was reinforced by the 1927 Leipzig international exhibition. The British display was organised by the DIA due to official disinterest. Manufacturers also showed little interest, resulting in 'a display more appropriate to the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society than the DIA.' Minnie

97 Aufseeser designs are given in 1933, 1936, 1937, 1938 and 1939 Turnbull & Stockdale Ltd. Photo Books; the A. Sanderson & Sons Ltd. Freelance design book, 1919-1940; and analysis of Warner & Sons Ltd. freelance design data in Boydell, C. Marion Dorn: A Study of the Working Methods of the Female Professional Textile Designer in the 1920s and 1930s, Huddersfield University, 1992 (PhD thesis).
McLeish told the following DIA meeting that it had taught them that 'we do not understand the modern movement in design, and we do not like it. We may be right or we may be wrong, but at any rate we have no part in it.' Further development of the DIA 'fitness to purpose' approach to printed textiles was given in July 1928 by A.P. Simon, criticising dress fabric design for not being designed with a consideration of how it will look as garments and with the absorbency of the material used as a design guide: 'the colour should be allowed to run naturally [with a] certain amount of variation in ground and indefiniteness of outline.'

However, by 1929 Modernist furnishing textile design was sufficiently well established for Dorothy Todd and Raymond Mortimer to state that:

'Roughly speaking, there are two schools of modern textile design: that which employs purely geometric patterns, and that which is generally more free and fanciful, in which trees, horses, the human figure, and so on, are freely and often amusingly introduced.'

That it was accepted as existing by contemporary sources is indicated by an article in 1930 by Aldous Huxley, in which he states that there is:

'such a thing as a well established tradition in contemporary decoration . . which has evolved out of the harsh artistic puritanism of Cubism . . into something more ripe and humane . . the new style has had time to grow mellow, to perfect itself.'

A similar perception is demonstrated in the trade press:

'When modernistic designs were first introduced to the furnishing trade by French designers, they made little headway in this country. They were too revolutionary and exotic to appeal to British taste; but modernism seems to have undergone considerable modification, and the designs now coming on to this market are more restrained and less aggressive in character. A good deal of feeling exists for these modified modernistic furnishings, particularly in damasks, tapestries, and carpets, and to a less extent in cretonnes. In fact, many leading authorities in the trade are firmly of opinion that, provided the movement is not carried too far by the use of extreme effects and colours, we are definitely in for a period of modernistic designs - a permanent period rather than a passing phase.'

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100 Ibid.
103 Huxley, A. 'Notes on Decoration', The Studio, Oct. 1930, pp239-42.
104 'Modernistic Influence in Soft Furnishings', The Drapers' Record, 28/3/31, p38.
Active discussion of design issues in textiles at this time is indicated in a series of DIA meetings. On 1st May 1930, there was an ebullient DIA meeting in Manchester, in which 'Design for Cotton and Rayon Dress Fabrics' was debated with much heat by W.E. Currie, M. Moss, M. Prax and B.P. Roche and chaired by Lt.-Col. K.G. Maxwell. Further meetings listed included talks on 'The Design and Making of Textiles' given by Alec Hunter, George L. Brown, F.S. Sims and chaired by E. Goodale (all from Warners) on 13th February 1931 and (noted in May 1931) a lunch meeting on 'Design in Relation to the Textile Trades'. Noel Carrington states that the DIA became polarised in the early 1930s between Modernists and 'traditionalists' and had developed a clearly Modern Movement position with publication of the journal 'Design In Industry' in Spring 1932, edited by E. Maxwell Fry (a Modernist architect). The transition of the organisation to a Modernist viewpoint by this date has been accepted by subsequent commentators.

Resistance to the dominance of Modernist architects over interior decoration was shown by Ronald Fleming (interior designer at Fortnum & Mason's), who advocated a more free and personal style:

'Can't we be ourselves in 1932? If we know what we are and some of us think we know: but the architects are afraid of us it seems... No, you must give way a little; we can give you comfort and warmth, light, gaiety and space – a background for your belongings and personality.'

Many artists moved into freelance graphic and textile design at this time, due to the collapse of the London art market during the Depression (Section 3.6.3). This may have been a factor in a new acceptance of decorative and applied design within Modernist circles. By 1933, a version of Modernism was common in which the relation of printed textile design to the painter was emphasised. This view of Modernism was held by Noel Carrington, (who credits the DIA as his inspiration), suggesting that the new developments in printed cloth are due to its greater amenability to contemporary aesthetics and ideology.

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105 GD 325/ 60/ 35 DIA Journal, 1936.
107 Pevsner, N. 'History of the DIA', DIA Yearbook, 1975, Pevsner comments that a Modernist emphasis becomes evident in the 1928 DIA Journal No. 6; The Encyclopaedia of Decorative Arts, p53; broadly accepted in MacCarthy, F. All Things Bright and Beautiful: Design in Britain 1830 to Today, George Allen & Unwin Ltd, 1972, p101.
than trades where form is dictated by construction. He considered that fitness and beauty were the two distinct ideas that go to inspire good design, of which beauty was the most important. Thus printed pattern design defines a Modernism nearer to that of art than other design media. A certain redefinition of the Modernist canon within pattern design was necessary, because the surface decoration (the raison d'être of printed textiles or wallpaper) is inimicable to the Modernist ideal of an undecorated surface. Herbert Read (artist and critic) considered that 'fabrics are painterly, and can even be used with a pictorial intention, as in tapestries.' and more generally, that although stylised form is widely used in modern textiles, geometric ornament is most suitable for mechanical production. He believed that the transforming power of Modernism would be to bring beauty to industrial products. For him, Modernism was 'a conscious return to the classic formulas of economy, simplicity and clarity' but he also, unusually, stressed 'the personal, symbolic and decorative.' This approach is echoed by Allan Walton, who stated that printed fabric 'is most suitable for experiments in the use of personality . . . it is a more suitable vehicle for the reproduction of the personal and particular flavour of an artist's work'.

In the later 1930s, fashion moved against the Modernists, with a rise in revival styles. In 1935 William Turnbull noted that 'the Regency cult is already upon us', while Alastair Morton (director of Edinburgh Weavers) commented in 1938 that:

'during the last few years we have had a spate of stunt fashions in designs – ropes and shells and waves and curves and leaves and God knows what. Partly in disgust at these continual changes and partly as a relief from the effort of building up a contemporary style, a great part of interior decoration has reverted with a sigh to a re-hashing of period styles – Classical, Regency, Victorian, William Morris and a number of others, so that there is great danger that the modern movement in this country will not survive its infancy.'

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111 Read, H. Art and Industry, Faber & Faber, 1934, p123.
112 Ibid.
114 Walton, A. 'Modern Furnishing Fabrics', Decoration, No. 4, 1935, p27
Illustrations in *Design and Decoration in the Home* are accompanied by the statements that
‘White floral patterns are slowly coming back into favour for printed fabrics. The pattern is
still kept bold and formalised as compared with the early floral cretonnes.’ and noting ‘the
bold geometrical and abstract designs which are now in fashion.’

Confirmation of the acceptance of Modernism by some parts of the industry is the
involvement of self-declared Modernists such as Paul Nash, Ben Nicholson, Eileen Holder
and Barbara Hepworth (members of Unit One) in freelance textile design for Cresta and
Edinburgh Weavers. Alastair Morton’s involvement with Unit One resulted in him
commissioning and developing the October 1937 Constructivist fabrics range of
Edinburgh Weavers. He defined Modernism as:

‘In architecture it might be expressed as the dialectical interplay of free functional
planning on the one hand with the architect’s aesthetic sense of the beauty of
shapes and spaces and colours on the other.’ In textile design, it was based on ‘this
same rhythmic beauty of pure shape and space and colour.’

A formal analysis of the nature of printed textile design in relation to art and craft was
given by William Turnbull in 1938, taking a similar position to Clive Bell:

‘Is it just a craft form or ought it to be an art form in the aesthetic meaning of the
term? . . . It seems to me that only about 30% of the output of textile printers can be
termed Art, though *most* of it is technically excellent. Of this bulk the designing is
adequate in a craft sense without being inspired and it reflects its derivative origin
– too much ‘adaptation’ and too little inspiration! . . I am referring to what we
normally call Manchester prints. . . It would however, be absurd to pretend that the
great mass of printed furnishing fabrics show originality and artistic merit. . . There
are few things on which there is more difference of opinion than as to what
constitutes art. For me it is something personal in that it exists only where there is a
genuine power of creation, inspired by an inner experience and manifested skilfully
through form and colour. . if my definition of art is correct, then we cannot escape
from the conclusion that merely copying, imitative and adaptive work will not do,
any more than will mere decoration for decoration’s sake, or to cover bad basic
construction; nor will ill conceived form and crude colour combination. If these
things are present they will not be redeemed by skilful technical excellence.’

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117 Ibid., p76 and 73.
118 GD 326/ 164/ 22: 1938 address to buyers, introducing the Edinburgh Weavers Constructivist Fabrics, as
part of the Autumn range.
6.3.5 Conclusion: Modernist Pattern Design

Modernism in British textile design was strongly influenced by Wiener Werkstatte textile design and Post-Impressionist art in the 1910-15 period, leading to intense debate in 1917-9 on the significance of printed textile design. A consensus on the design style and approach of textile designs considered appropriate to DIA Modernism was established in the 1919 Manchester exhibition. Little is known of the designs chosen, though textiles designed for the West African market were given prominence and dress fabric prints were displayed (probably including CPA designs, since they were active DIA members and organised the design competition in 1917-8\textsuperscript{120}), as well as furnishing prints. Parisian pattern design in the 1925 Paris exhibition had a considerable influence, though Wiener Werkstatte remained the model of Modernist textile design accepted by many. There was increasing acceptance by textile manufacturers of a Modernism based on art and the aesthetic values of 'significant form' in the 1930s (which did not see a division between expressionist and abstract art), rather than the Modernist design discourse, in which decoration remained problematic. The art-based Modernism of printed textile design was obscured by the dominant perception of Modernism associated with three-dimensional design: an approach that prioritised function, new materials, technology and structural form, in which pattern was considered an irrelevant ornamental clutter.

\textsuperscript{120} DIA Journal, No. 5, October 1917 and Journal No. 6, January 1918.
6.4 Design Analysis of Trends in Company Production

6.4.1 Dress Fabric

6.4.1.1 The CPA

The design approach of the CPA is indicated by its early involvement with the DIA, and the membership of managing director Mr Lennox Lee of the Society of Industrial Artists. The importance attached to originality in design is shown by a minute in April 1923 proposing that the Atelier Department be disbanded and the designers distributed to branches, since: 'although under Mr Rodger's management this Department had been very successful commercially, it had a tendency to destroy individuality.' However, since the Association sold via wholesalers (who would define the image of their advertisements) in the home market, there is little material available to indicate a public design image. Figure 6.24, a 1937 British Industries Fair advertisement, demonstrates the factual emphasis and clarity of layout of publicity produced by the Association. Analysis of the furnishing prints of the CPA is given in Section 6.3.2.1.

The structure of design management in the CPA was based on small studios in the subsidiary merchant companies and a central Atelier or catering department that supplied designs to works managers. In addition, a Design Department registered new designs and decided whether new designs were required for specific markets. This structure was established in 1908. Mr Hollinghurst appears to have had a central role in accepting freelance designs or passing them to the relevant merchant department or 'caterer' for a decision. The central Atelier Department was led by Mr Rodger until 1923, when he was replaced by Frank Goldthorp and Hugh G. Davidson as Joint Managers. A Paris

121 M75/ Directors' Minute Book No. 7, 24/4/23.
123 M75/ 1922-28/ 93 For example, in a letter (25/9/28) to a Mr Mealdn, he is advised to apply to Mr Hollinghurst of the Design Department with specimens of his work; in M75/ 1922-28/ 93.4 entries for a design competition (8/10/28) were to be sent to Mr Hollinghurst.
124 M75/ Directors' Minute Book No. 7, 24/4/23 'Though under Mr Rodger's management this Department had been very successful commercially, it had a tendency to destroy individuality. It was proposed to utilise Mr Rodgers services in an advisory service.\*; M75/ 1922-28/ 3.82 A memo of 5/12/23 advised that Messrs Frank Goldthorp and Hugh G. Davidson had been appointed Joint Managers of the Atelier Department and Mr Rodgers was appointed as a Designs Advisor.

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Atelier, led by Mr Kipping, seems to have had the freedom to purchase freelance and subscription designs (see Section 3.4.3).125

Examples of design for the home market prior to 1923, from sample books or museum collections, are minimal. A small number of simplified floral designs for the home market were given in the 1919 Potter's Pattern Book of Styles at Matlock, probably warp printed (Figures 6.26-8). Export market design analysis of the Matlock Potters samples is given in Section 6.4.4.1. Two individual samples of dress fabric from 1921 are available from the Victoria & Albert Museum collection (Figures 6.29-30). The extreme degree of abstraction, colour intensity and subtlety of the watercolour effect is notable. In the 1923 sample book (at the Manchester Museum of Science and Industry), the vitality and range of designs is evident. An emphasis on line and abstracted form runs through the designs, from floral designs (Figures 6.31 and 6.37) to the semi-abstraction of Figures 6.32 and 6.38 and abstract designs in Figures 6.32-5. Some abstract designs based on loose colour areas (Figure 6.34: similar to designs categorised as 'fractal Persian' in the 1923 Ferguson Bros. analysis) or maze patterns were produced. Humour is shown in camouflaged Turkish figures in Figure 6.37 and the snail appearing to the left of Figure 6.38, while an innovative approach to composition is demonstrated by the bold contrast of scribbled black foliage and a single red spot in Figure 6.32. A brief fashion for Egyptian designs inspired by the Tutankamun tomb (Figure 6.301) and Modernist interpretations of well-established pictorial Chinoiserie design types (Figure 6.297) and abstract calligraphic Chinese-influenced designs, while an African or Australian Aborigine influence is indicated for Figure 6.34. A few more directly representational designs were included, such as the little girl in Figure 6.39 – reminiscent of Laura Knight's *The Beach* painting in 1908 - or the palm tree in Figure 6.40, closer to contemporary French toile designs.

The decision of the CPA to go into a higher class of dress fabrics in October 1925 in competition with Parisian import firms (see Section 4.6.2), investing £60,000 capital to do so, is likely to have had an effect on their designs, though no examples are available. A range of nursery designs were developed during the 1920s, using popular culture for design sources, with 'Felix' designs produced in 1924-5 (Figure 6.302) and negotiations

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125 M75/ 1922-28/ 93, invitation for Miss Syrett to call upon Mr G.H. Kipping, the head of the Paris Atelier,
with Pathé Films in 1926 for the use of further cartoon characters in designs to build on the success of the Felix designs.\textsuperscript{126} Other figurative nursery designs in the later 1920s include Wedding and Seaside designs (Figure 6.294).\textsuperscript{127}

The 1931-4 Potter's Pattern Book at Matlock has a variety of abstract and floral prints, demonstrating particular discharge, resist and other techniques and dye types. These include some export market style prints: indigo, red-print designs for African markets and some with diamond marks overprinted on representational patterns, similar to designs in the 1937 Pattern Book. There are also probable home market designs, with intensely coloured Modernist floral designs on dark grounds, both in the painterly brushmark style (Figure 6.19) and as flat and hatched colour areas (Figure 6.18), voile prints with pale leaf or stripe and disc designs and small scraps (probably artificial silk) of tartan or Modernist small flower designs. The 1937 Potter's Pattern Book at Matlock has scattered examples of home trade type prints of floral designs in a loosely drawn, Modernist style (Figure 6.64). There is also a range of designs that may be export market, though no data on the market is given. They have very bright, geometrical patterns, with secondary abstract or representational motifs printed across the pattern (Figures 6.61-3).

The 'Potter's' Engraving Book of 1934-9 appears to be home trade dress prints, in contrast to the specialist technique styles related to particular export markets. There is a distinctly Modernist approach, demonstrated both by the high proportion of abstract designs (42% overall) and the main type of figurative design: i.e. compositions of form, colour and mark-making, rather than representations of particular flowers (examples are Figures 6.46, 6.273 and 5.15, 5.18-19) The emphasis on abstract design has been noted by Valerie Mendes, who considered that the CPA produced 'numerous inventive and lively designs' by exploring the possibilities of abstract patterns in combination with the latest range of fast colours.\textsuperscript{128} A sector of the designs throughout the period were single colour green (or occasionally black) designs, mainly abstract (Figure 6.44), which were produced for overall prints, as advertised in Figure 6.25. In 1936 the rise in two-colour prints (Figure

\textsuperscript{126} M75/ 1922-8/ 93.2 Copyright licence for 'Jerry the Troublesome Tyke' design, 11/6/26.
\textsuperscript{127} These isolated textile samples are held in the Victoria and Albert Museum collection.
\textsuperscript{128} Mendes, V. The Victoria & Albert Museum's Textile Collection: British Textiles from 1900 to 1937, Victoria & Albert Museum, 1992, p12.
6.13) appears partly in a greater proportion of abstract design and partly by greater simplicity in the floral design. A distinct change in style occurred in 1937-8, shown by the increase in proportion of floral against abstract design (from 49% floral in 1936 to 66% in 1938), although the total number of designs was falling. This swing back towards floral designs can be related to the increase in multi-coloured design. This indicates the direct relationship between style or fashion and investment required. Pictorial designs appear as a clear segment of production in 1936-8 (Figures 6.41-2, 45-6, 6.305).

The 1933-47 CPA sample book at the Archive of Art and Design, Victoria and Albert Museum has a more standardised approach, with notes of the colours of the year and variations on a number of themes such as small squares, loosely drawn vertical lines (Figures 6.51, 6.54), mid-sized, Modernist meadow flowers (Figure 6.52) and smaller, more conventional floral designs (Figure 6.53) given in each year’s designs. The reduction in total production, with the closure of print works in 1918-30 (see Section 5.4.4.1), may be reflected in the smaller range of designs shown in the 1934-40 samples than for 1923. These designs appear to be printed at a lower quality, and are probably cheaper than the Potter’s designs.

Birch Vale sample book (at the Manchester Museum of Science and Industry) contains silk print orders from 1928-38. Design analysis is given in Figure 6.47. About half are floral designs – some Modernist (Figure 6.49, 6.54), others in conventional rose styles (Figure 6.55), with a few pictorial designs or motifs (Figures 6.52-3, 6.299). Most of the prints are in rather garish colours. A fifth of the designs have simple abstract motifs, particularly stripes (Figure 6.52). Variations on a Paisley style also recur as a distinct sub-section, covering designs with a Persian carpet or Indian emphasis (Figure 6.48).

6.4.1.2 Ferguson Bros. Ltd.

There are no comments in the minutes to indicate the design approach of the company. However, the expenditure on advertising showing innovative, very fashionable dress designs to illustrate the fabrics (Figures 6.65-6, 8-70), the variety of designs produced and the emphasis on innovative Modernist design in the sample books indicates that design was given a high priority in the company. These innovative Modernist designs include
experiments in mark-making and technique (Figures 6.21, 6.75-8, 6.87, 6.96, 6.99-100, 6.102), textural effects (Figure 6.212), a loose painterly style with evident brush-marks (Figures 6.93-5), compositions based on loose line drawing (Figures 6.83, 6.97, 6.104) or on the relation between flat shapes and colour (Figures 6.84, 6.74, 6.85-6, 6.92, 6.98) or a combination of these techniques (Figures 6.73, 6.80, 6.82, 6.101, 6.213). There are no references to specialist design or printed textile department committees or indication of the design management structure or responsibilities within the company. In the centenary publication of 1924, a design studio is described briefly, which seems to have been principally occupied with adapting designs.\textsuperscript{129} The minutes state that only the appointment of managers requires the authority of the Board, but the engagement of one staff designer in 1935 is minuted. It is possible that this is a senior designer, with higher quality education/training, experience and salary level: junior designers, apprentices and colourists could have been appointed by the Print Department Manager.

The series of advertisements give a broad impression of fashion trends in fabric and dress, but the number of fabrics illustrated are necessarily limited. From 1918-22, three dated advertisements survive: in 1918 a soft focus painting of a girl wearing a plain dyed fabric dress with an abstract or abstracted floral design is shown. September 1921 has an active, windblown girl in a yellow and brown striped dress, while the foreground is a black ground fabric with simple Modernist blue flowers (Figure 6.65). The design for the following September has a formal portrait of a girl in a long dress of white voile with floral groups. A circular arrangement of samples is shown in the Drapers' Organiser in March 1923, illustrating nursery designs of small figures of different nationalities contrasted with abstract designs of loosely drawn squares and other geometrical patterns and designs using simple floral forms. A Drapers' Organiser cover in Oct 1925 shows fabrics (abstract and floral carpet-type designs and a spot design) arranged around a drawing of a factory scene of the weaving shed, while a 1926 cover has a girl with a short geometric hairstyle examining fabrics with large Modernist floral designs (Figure 6.67). There were also Spring and Autumn 1928 advertisements showing displays of fabric. Fashion model cover designs for Drapers' Record include a painterly representation of a girl in a blue/green dress with orange sash and a black beret in September 1924 and a girl in a long, loose, kimono-type dress with sweeping stripes in September 1925 (Figure 6.66). In 1926-7 the

\textsuperscript{129} Centenary Ferguson Brothers, Holme Head Works, Carlisle, 1824-1924, Charles Thurnam & Sons, 1924.
Drapers' Record covers show a short dress with a dark floral pattern, a very long white dress with large red flowers (as the tablecloth in Figure 6.66), a painting of an 18th C. style yellow crinoline dress and a sweeping 18th C. blue dress. The 1928-9 covers have mainly abstract textile patterns (and one small floral design), with the focus of the advertisement on the precision of cut of the dress (Figure 6.68). A girl in more conventional dress (with a floral pattern) was shown in a Neoclassical landscape (Figure 6.69) and on a ship in 1930. In 1930-1 there were also a range of fabric compositions showing a cheerful British seaside scene, butterflies, lambs, a ship and flags. In 1932-6 fashion plate images were used, with references in the text to Paris couture – accessories include a loose bunch of bright flowers, a chunky wooden fence, a Dalmatian dog (Figure 6.70), balcony railings and large hats.

An abundance of designs are available in the 1923 Fancies sample book, with a variety of striking abstract (Figure 6.74), large Modernist floral (Figure 6.73) and fractal 'Persian carpet' influenced designs. However, it is possible that these fabric samples may be subscription patterns, since they are scraps without any design numbers. There is also a sample book of 1932-41 Fancies, which could be subscription patterns, since the samples are also irregular-shaped scraps of fabric without design numbers, but with occasional labels in French. A few of the designs occur in both books, but the 1932-41 book includes some Stehli Silk-type American prints and a wide variety of abstract and floral designs, mainly on light artificial silk fabrics.

The proportion of abstract design dropped during the 1920s from 64% in the 1923 sample book to 33% in the 1926-31 book, while there was an increasing proportion of Modernist floral designs (Figure 6.71). Unfortunately, however, the 1926-31 Printed Cotton samples do not have any pattern numbers or dates to indicate chronology. The printed cotton samples have a painterly Modernist style in floral designs (Figures 6.93-5), with a range of highly innovative abstract designs (Figures 6.96-8, 100, 102) and a smaller range of nursery designs (Figures 6.306-310). The 1930-3 Special Screenprints sample book is a fairly small volume of designs, many with a batik effect in a range of blue/ green tones (Figure 6.211), some more brightly coloured (Figure 6.213). There are also some simple
floral designs (also produced as art silk prints) and some abstract patterns with a pebble overprint (Figures 6.212, 14).

Comparison of the 1930 and 1932 art silks and 1930-1 and 1933-4 voiles indicate conflicting stylistic trends in the early 1930s (Figure 6.71). The 1930 art silks were dominated by small Modernist floral (Figures 6.89-90) and abstract designs (Figures 6.85-8), with larger scale Modernist floral designs (Figure 6.92) in 1932. In the art silk patterns, there was an increase in proportion of conventional floral designs from 9% in 1930 to 26% in 1932, with a reduction of abstract from 49% to 36% and Modernist floral from 35% to 28%. However, a very similar profile of design styles appears in the 1930-1 and 1933-4 voile sample books. More detailed differences are an emphasis on an experimental variety of mark-making techniques in the 1930-1 voiles (Figures 6.75-8), with greater clarity of form in the 1933-4 designs, often combined with scribbled line drawing (Figures 6.80, 82-4). The 1930-39 Fergotex samples were mainly small floral or berry designs, often in a hand-drawn line style of fairly realistic designs (Figures 6.103, 105), and supported with a range of nursery designs, mainly Mabel Lucie Attwell children and farm motifs (Figures 6.311). The trial book has designs from 1937-49, with semi-legible details of designers, fabric, printing cost, etc. It covers a range of styles (analysed according to fabric type in Section 6.4.3 and designer category in Sections 6.4.5.1-2), though with a higher proportion of conventional and more representational floral designs than chronologically earlier series (Figures 6.256-270). The swing away from a high proportion of abstract design in the 1920s to provision of a range of floral designs from conventional to semi-abstract in the 1930s at Ferguson Bros. Ltd. is indicated in their advertising:

'Quiet conventional designs, soft florals, bold futurist patterns, Ferguson’s have patterns for every taste, frock and figure.'

6.4.1.3 United Turkey Red Ltd.

The appointment of a Managing Director was announced at the 1939 AGM, following the serious losses in 1938. Previously, the Chairman of Directors, Mr H.W. Christie, seems to have been the figure of most authority in the minutes of meetings between the directors and heads of departments. There are few statements on design by directors in the minutes,

130 DB 110/224, c1930-3 advertisement.
to indicate a particular direction by management. No reference is made to any other regular management committees in these minutes or to any structure or individual responsibility for design: this appears to have been the responsibility of departments, with some suggestions on strategic development from directors. Confirmation of the design responsibility of heads of departments is given by a visit of Mr Fleming (head of D department, which produced cretonnes, quilts and tablecovers) to the Silver Studio. The Silver Studio records state that he called in 1924, ordered several floral designs and took some designs to show their quilt clients.\textsuperscript{132} The company approach to dress fabric design appears to have been a relatively passive one, in producing designs within accepted market styles. New designs within a particular style type were produced in response to market demand: for example, in June 1923 ‘fresh designs of printed shirtings were required, as they were being sold freely.’\textsuperscript{133} Contact with the market was maintained by managers and reports of the market response to new products noted in Board meetings: in December 1927, ‘our delivery of cretonnes had been well received by the market.’\textsuperscript{134} When no orders resulted from new D department art silk designs, Mr C. – evidently a departmental manager or sub-manager, though not Head of Department - was instructed to go to London and ‘find out if our designs are suitable for the market and also what design is in demand in the market.’\textsuperscript{135} The company was as alert to competitive threats in the quality of design for standard style types, as they were for the quality of fabric and finishes (Sections 5.4.2.2 and 5.4.2.4): the department was instructed to get samples of the CPA’s printed shirtings selling well. In March 1926 it was ‘reported that our work in this style [Para Red and Yellow scarves] was not quite so good as the CPA. Mr Urquhart asked for samples of the CPA’s production.’\textsuperscript{136} New style types becoming popular were also watched for: in April 1926, the Chairman referred to business being done in double bordered kangas and gave Mr Urquhart patterns so he could go into the matter.\textsuperscript{137} Emphasis in design for dress fabrics is based on accepted categories of export market styles (Section 6.4.4.1), with greycloth supplies categorised as Turkey Red, Para Red, Garments, Scarves and Unallocated for each department at the Alexandria Works.\textsuperscript{138} The collection of prints at the

\textsuperscript{132} 1921-25 diary, 8/2/24: Silver Studio Collection, op. cit.
\textsuperscript{133} UGD 13/ 5/ 6, Directors’ Minute Book, June 1923.
\textsuperscript{134} Ibid., 14/12/27.
\textsuperscript{135} Ibid., 10/7/29.
\textsuperscript{136} Ibid., 10/3/26, A Department.
\textsuperscript{137} Ibid., 14/4/26.
\textsuperscript{138} Ibid., 19/1/21.
National Museum of Scotland, dated c.1920, show a range of export dress fabrics and handkerchiefs with similarities to the export fabrics in the 1919 and later Potters sample books. There is no indication of the design styles produced for the home market.

6.3.1.4 Other Dress Print Production

The small Cryséde Ltd. company produced block print dress fabric designs on silk, designed by Alec Walker, in a loose, painterly brushmark style influenced by Raoul Dufy (Figures 6.164-5). Cresta Silks was established as a similar dress silk print company by Tom Heron in 1929, having previously worked at Cryséde. The Modernist credentials of their textiles were declared with a shopfront designed by Wells Coates, blocky sans serif typography by E McKnight Kauffer (very similar to the Wiener Werkstatte monograms) commissioned in c.1931 and the employment of Modernist painters as designers.139

Dress Fabric prints were commission-printed by the UTR and Turnbull & Stockdale Ltd., but unfortunately no examples of commissioned prints produced by the UTR are available. The Turnbull & Stockdale Ltd. commissioned prints (held at Lancashire Record Office) cover 36 companies, from 1935-8, of which two were African export merchants (see Section 6.4.4.1). The home market prints fall into two main types: either a hand-drawn, scribbled style of fairly representational floral prints (Figures 6.248-50) or brightly coloured, Modernist floral designs (Figures 6.245-7), though there were also Modernist abstract designs (Figures 6.242-4) and a few rayon prints of conventional floral design and intense colours (Figure 6.241).

6.4.2 Furnishing fabric design

6.4.2.1 The CPA

The CPA sold a range of furnishing prints, of which the highest quality were the branded Graftons lines. A visit by Silver Studio representatives to the Graftons section of the CPA in March 1928 found that:

'They are quite anxious for us to submit them good new ideas for very high class but of a useful type for 7 colours, 4 colours and more important ones. Natural flowers, etc, simply treated in 11 colours and stipples with water roller.'\textsuperscript{140}

There were also discussions with Mr Stewart of the CPA, though it is unclear whether these relate to furnishing or dress fabrics (or both):

'Mr Stewart found none interesting at the moment – they seem to want either good small effects in the style of our Pom Pom design – good coverings of the same snappy novelty or large ones for surface work after his rich Wisteria and Trellis and also for 50" Warps after the style of his Waterlily.'\textsuperscript{141}

The Victoria & Albert Museum has a number of printed furnishing fabrics produced by the CPA in the interwar period. These are mainly from the immediate post-war period of 1919-23 (Figures 6.106-7, 109-111), with dynamic, abstract compositions or Modernist interpretations of conventional styles in bold colours (especially purple, blue and similar Bakst-influenced intense colours). A similarity of colouring and style with an abstract Modernist design of the period by F. Steiner (Figure 6.108) is evident, in the bubble and loose stripe motifs. There may also be a similarity with the Sanderson furnishing prints of the early 1920s (see below). The remaining 1920s designs include interpretations of bird or trellis designs and Modernist prints combining stripe and highly abstracted motifs (Figures 6.112-3). The Grafton designs (in comparison with unbranded CPA prints) may be in a slightly more traditional style, with more muted colours, but insufficient examples are available to characterise substantive trends. A more representational floral style design is indicated by the advertisement for Grafton Cretonnes in 1931, at a period when Modernist design was popular in furnishing prints (Figure 6.25). The CPA furnishing prints of the 1930s at the Victoria & Albert Museum include a range of marine themes, such as dancing sailors, surfers (Figure 6.114), seagulls (Figure 6.115), rope and seahorses.

\textsuperscript{140} 1925 diary, entry on 21/3/28. Silver Studio Collection, op. cit.
6.4.2.2 The United Turkey Red Co. Ltd.

There are few fabric samples or notes in the minutes clearly referring to their design of furnishing fabrics. There seems to have been a steady supply of new designs produced for tablecloths. New design was used as an important competitive strategy in the industry. Its impact was monitored closely in the minutes of the United Turkey Red Company: in May 1922 a director noted that 'Tables covers were doing well, and the Jazz patterns seemed to be catching on'.142 This is one of the very few quotes that refers to a specific design style, rather than changes in technique or material. In November 1922 it was reported that the new patterns in tablecloths were moving well in the market143 and a new range of tablecloths in August 1924 was followed by a note in October that tablecloths were doing very well.144 In June 1925 also, ‘tablecloths are doing well, especially the 'Willow Plate' pattern'.145

The only actual samples available appear to be registered designs at the Public Record Office. There are six waterproof fabric samples from January 1933, designed within a square, with crude Modernist interpretations of Indian-style bird and floral pattern motifs in bright pink, green and yellow. No waterproofed fabric is mentioned in the minutes, but it is possible that the tablecloth designs mentioned could be waterproof, for kitchen tables. These samples seem a surprising design choice for an oilcloth tablecloth, but tablecloths were produced for export as well as Home Trade.146 Some reference was also made to chintz designs (see Section 6.), with a request for Para Chintzes with Javanese figures in December 1928.147 The UTR and Hubbert, Perco, Davis Feather Mills made separate visits to the Silver Studio, selecting traditional floral designs to be commission-printed by the UTR for quilts.148

141 Ibid.
142 UGD 13/5/6, Directors' and Heads of Departments’ Minute Book, D department, 10/5/22.
143 Ibid., 11/22.
144 Ibid., 8/24 and 10/24.
145 Ibid., 6/25.
146 Ibid., 12/12/28: ‘Holland had taken table covers freely, both for Home Trade and Java market’; Ibid., 15/5/30 ‘distinct falling off in sale of table covers due to Japanese competition’ implying export market.
147 Ibid., 12/12/28.
148 1923-5 diary, Silver Studio Collection, op. cit.
6.4.2.3 Turnbull & Stockdale Ltd.

Turnbull & Stockdale Ltd. had a tradition of 'good design' (i.e. 19th century Design Reform criteria of good design) dating from when the firm was founded with Lewis F. Day as artistic director in 1881.\textsuperscript{149} Statements on design by Captain William Turnbull, whether in FCP, DIA or Textile Institute contexts, indicate an appreciation for good drawing, but disdain for the imitation and adaptation common in pattern design (Section 6.2.3). No information on the design management structure of Turnbull & Stockdale Ltd. is available, due to the lack of minute books or other suitable archival material. The intended image of the company, in relation to design style, can be seen by the 1933-6 British Industries Fair advertisements and the 1933 retail sales booklet, shown in Figures 6.117-8. The majority of designs available in the 1930s photo books at Bury Museum and Art Gallery show naturalistic, highly skilled drawing of plants, often adapting historical (particularly Jacobean) or foreign styles. A trend for Modernist representational and abstract designs can be seen passing through the company: occurring to a small extent in 1930, dominating in 1933 and restricted to Modernist floral designs by 1936 (see Figures 6.147-50, 197-202, 204, 251-2). Designs for 1937 and samples for 1938 and 1939 show increasing nursery designs (Figures 6.316-7), a recurrence of historical styles (Figures 6.166, 181-2) and a combination of traditional floral (Figure 6.205) and some Modernist floral designs (Figure 6.206). Traditional is used here to indicate designs using observational representation of three dimensions.

6.4.2.4 Morton Sundour Fabrics Ltd.

Morton Sundour produced or bought their own roller print designs, which were mainly printed by Standfast (a subsidiary company of MSF Ltd.) or Apponaug. The importance of design quality to the company is indicated by a comment from Alastair Morton on James Morton's attitude to business:

'I am tempted to say that none of the great decisions of his life were justified at the time on strictly commercial grounds. He took commercial risks and achieved commercial success in order to make into a practical reality a deep aesthetic conviction. That is the quality of industrial leadership. Let follow who may!'\textsuperscript{150}

\textsuperscript{149} Menzies, V. *British Textiles From 1900 to 1937*, Victoria & Albert Museum, 1992, p93.
\textsuperscript{150} Morton, J. op. cit., p465: statement made at the Sundour Jubilee celebrations, in 1956.
Their company image to the trade emphasised the quality market aimed at, in the 1921 *Drapers Record* advertisement ‘The Chinese Dragon Design’ from the Cumberland Print range, displayed on an easel (Figure 6.122). Advertisements to the general public concentrated on the fast quality of the dyes used, rather than the design (see Section 5.4.5.3). A review of their display at the 1923 Drapery, Textile and Women’s Wear Exhibition at the Royal Agricultural Hall underlines the design emphasis:

‘Old-world patterns seem greatly in favour. One noted some exquisite patterns resembling old English chintz and others in the style of Louis XV.’

A similar impression of traditionalism is given by their 1928 *Drapers Record* advertisement entitled ‘Window Treatment in Sundour Artificial Silk Damask in the William and Mary period.’ The emphasis is on giving an impression of a period room, combined with vivid contemporary colour, as advocated by Gloag. Style trends in the engraving design book (D2) from 1923-35 are analysed in Figures 6.119-20, demonstrating an overall emphasis on floral designs but with a strong element of foreign and historical source designs, including a significant number of pictorial prints. The foreign styles were predominantly Persian from 1927-35, with a sprinkling of other national styles including a large group of Sardinian designs in 1926 (see Section 6.6.1). The total numbers of designs are very small, so variations in the particular designs chosen have a significant impact. A change in design policy occurred with the sudden change in economic circumstances in 1930. A range of simpler studio designs were introduced with fewer colours (the ‘much smaller things in decoration’: see Section 6.4.2.4) and the expensive block print workshop was closed. These designs were a development of the ‘Eitherway’ roller print range designs established as a cheap alternative in the early 1920s (Figure 6.14): piece dyed fabrics, either overprinted with a single colour or discharge printed leaving a white pattern. The link between Modernist design and cheaper prints is shown in the sudden increase in Modernist representational and abstract designs for engraved roller prints in 1933 (Figure 6.119), when production of cheaper one and two-colour prints also occurred (Figure 6.14): this may be the new range of Sundour Speedwell Prints, advertised at the 1933 British Industries Fair (Figure 6.123). A change of image was implemented in 1936 with the movement of their London showrooms from the

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traditional City area to the West End. It promoted the high quality design status of their products, but introduced a more fashionable and innovative style, with well-designed contemporary décor designed by the Modernist architect Joseph Emberton, and new display techniques similar to those used in the New York premises. The emphasis in trade exhibitions was on style of presentation: the firm’s stand at the last British Industries Fair to be held before the war was designed by the avant-garde Misha Black. Screen prints may have been used for Modernist designs during the 1930s, supporting the new image: a Modernist screen print design is ‘Tropical Leaf’ by John Chirnside, shown at the Paris International Exhibition in 1937 (Figure 6.209).

In 1937 there was a re-organisation from a department to a functional structure, proposed by the management consultants Urwick, Orr. Alastair Morton became Joint Managing Director and Marketing Manager with responsibility for ‘the selection of designs, preparation of ranges and selling prices, but only produced with the consent of Mr Brackenridge as Commercial Manager.’ Alastair Morton had a specifically Modernist approach, as he makes clear in his lectures and articles of 1938-41 (see quotes in Section 6.2.3). However, the style of most of the MSF textiles remained traditional: in 1937, the company stated that:

'We should say that the great bulk of our trade is done on good orthodox designs, although there is always a demand for a few really modern ones.'

This statement is supported by analysis of their designs commissioned to Stead McAlpin (Figure 6.125). The designs were generally traditional in approach: there was a higher proportion of historical designs than any companies except Wearne and Haynes and a relatively low level of abstract and Modernist representational design.

Edinburgh Weavers was established as a subsidiary company in 1929. It was intended to be a Modernist, experimental design unit that would lead rather than follow consumer taste. Anthony Hunt stated:

\[154\] Ibid., p377.  
\[155\] Ibid., pp377-8.  
\[156\] GD 326/228 Directors’ Minutes, 1935-40, 19/2/37.  
\[157\] Rena, M. ‘How Textiles are Made’, The Studio, February 1937, p94.
It stands in relation to furnishing as do Schiaparelli or Molyneux in the dress world: as a touchstone to fashion and a spearhead to coming trends.  

It produced a range of innovative nursery, abstract, leaf and motif designs, in screen print and weave (Figure 6.315). The 1937 Constructivist Fabrics range (Figure 6.210), designed by a group of leading artists and designers, was introduced by Alastair Morton as 'a conscious attempt to build a contemporary style in decoration in keeping with modern architecture and present day culture generally.' It is not, however, possible to give a style analysis of the total production of Edinburgh Weavers or assess from the whether there was any significant change in the stylistic emphasis of MSF after Edinburgh Weavers had been established, due to the small volume of designs available.

6.4.2.5 Alexander Morton & Co. Ltd.

In February 1914 all except the carpet and lace departments of the original Alexander Morton & Co. were taken over by Morton Sundour Fabrics Ltd., with the remaining departments becoming a re-formed A. Morton & Co. in Darvel. However, the hand block print unit established in 1912 may have remained under the management of A. Morton & Co., since the existence of the D3 Alexander Morton block print design book indicates a separate purchase system, with London and Carlisle design offices. The separation is further emphasised by the entry of designs from MSF in 1917-8, mainly in Egyptian or Coptic style. From 1923, most of the blocks for designs seem to have been owned by MSF. They were printed by 'Home' or a range of external French printers (Gros. Roman & Co., Lombard & Dumaine, Defosse & Kaith, Ferret Frères, Dumas). The implied common use of James Morton's collection of fabrics (see Section 6.5.1) also indicates a close relationship. The design book shows a much stronger emphasis on foreign and historical sources (i.e. adaptation of well established styles), than the D2 MSF design book, with fewer abstract or Modernist representational designs (Figure 6.121). An example of the rich, detailed pictorial designs favoured in block prints is the Haward Studio Chinoiserie print (Figure 6.279). Foreign influence styles with less scenic emphasis include designs of conventionalised figures within a floral ground pattern (Figure 6.281) and designs using Sardinian weave motifs (Figure 6.278). In addition, a range of European historical floral

158 Ibid.
159 GD 325/164/22, Morton, A. 'Edinburgh Weavers Constructivist Fabrics.'
styles are used, mainly French (Louis XV and XVI), Portuguese, Dutch (the tulip bouquets in Figure 6.282 are reminiscent of the paintings of Brueghel, van Huysam and others, as is the central flower basket in Wearne's block print in Figure 6.173) and British. The 'Peony and Bird' design of Figure 6.280 is very close in style to Figure 6.146, a 1930 Turnbull & Stockdale Ltd. design: they are based on a type of tropical bird design produced in the 1830s, influenced by Audubon's Birds of America, published in 1827-38. Analysis of design in relation to design source is given in Section 6.4.5.

6.4.2.6 Arthur Sanderson & Sons Ltd.

The printed textile branch of Arthur Sanderson & Sons Ltd. was named 'Eton Rural Cretonnes' in 1919, with a full range of designs printed in 1921, when the Uxbridge factory was finished. A review in The Journal of Decorative Art of the first range appeared in November, giving an impression of innovative and intensely coloured designs:

'There were magnificent jazz designs, stripes and broken arrangements of orange and black, glimmering blue and gold, and jade, and rich crimson, treated with all the harmonious freedom and abandonment which is jazz. There were exquisite arrangements of irises and crocuses. There were renderings of Japanese designs which seem velvet in parts, and one adjustment of the Bayeux tapestries which would enrich a library.'

The name was altered to Eton Rural Fabrics in Spring 1922 and the textile factory managed by Ivan Sanderson from early 1924. A Modernist approach was encouraged by the employment of Mea Angerer (previously a Wiener Werkstatte designer) as head designer in 1928-9. A further change of studio direction in the textile factory at Uxbridge occurred when Ivan brought in Barton Thomas 'in the early thirties' to manage the studio: Barton re-coloured the entire range. Style analysis of the studio and freelance design books is given in Appendix 3, since they appear to be mainly or entirely of wallpaper design (Figures A3.8-10). It is possible that many of the designs were used for both printed furnishing fabric and wallpaper. Analysis based on design descriptions rather than actual

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161 He was also the chairman and a major shareholder in Waring & Gillow, the London department store that promoted Modern design with avant-garde exhibitions (for example, the 1928 Serge Chermeyeff exhibition of modern European design).
162 Oral history transcript of interview with Eric Gilboy (textile designer) by Christine Woods, 11/4/91, A. Sanderson & Sons Ltd. archive.
designs reveals the actual terms used in the studio to describe styles, but the designs they refer to are not available, so the subtleties in the differences between these style labels cannot be defined. For example, 'modern curves' and 'modernistic circles' were drawn on the same date in 1933 by Miss Foord. 'Futuristic' and 'modernistic' appear to be particular types of stylisation 163: 'futuristic apple trees' appear in 1933 by A.E. Stenlake and 'futuristic chicks' by Miss Foord in 1934, while 'modernistic fish' by Miss Foord occur in 1932 and 'modernistic poppy heads' by A. Higgs in 1933. The design descriptions show that the main period of 'modern' and 'modernistic' designs from the studio fall between 1932-5, although they do appear throughout the 1930s records. A consistently different profile of design styles appear from the studio and freelance sets of results, suggesting that the studio had a more innovative approach, producing the kind of designs that were difficult to obtain from freelance sources (only 25 of the 384 designs described as 'modern' were from freelance designers). This emphasis in the studio design is supported (albeit disapprovingly) by the oral history evidence of Eric Gilboy, an apprentice designer in the studio:

'When I first went to Uxbridge [1933], it was what they called the Jazz period, the Jazz age, when all the walls were absolutely bare and you just had jazzy curtains and carpets... But the worst period ever, I think, didn't last very long, thank goodness, was the Jazz age - in textiles and wallpapers. You could do anything, you didn't have to be skilled.' 164

In 1936 the Eton Rural Fabrics label was withdrawn, the name changed to Sanderson Fabrics and production continued to 1944. 165

6.4.2.7 Stead McAlpin Ltd.

Stead McAlpin Ltd., although a commission-processing company, also produced some prints not on commission. The designs chosen by the company were printed as 'Open' designs, and sometimes taken up as commissions by other companies (Figure 6.185).

163 'Futurist' designs relate to the Italian art movement of Futurism, in which objects are portrayed as a series of abstracted sections shown simultaneously in order to suggest movement.
164 Ibid.
6.4.2.7.1 Stead McAlpin Ltd. ‘Open’ Designs

Stead McAlpin produced very few bird, historical or foreign source designs (see Figure 6.125), but their total proportion of abstract and Modernist representational designs chosen was higher than any other company, apart from Foxtons (Figures 6.140, 186, 196). Some of the more conventional designs were sourced from the Silver Studio: in September 1924 traditional floral trail designs, trellis and basket designs, Indian style floral designs and a peacock and flower design were bought. However, the visiting buyers were not entirely satisfied: they stated that they ‘found their effects not free and flowing enough and too spotty in their repeats.’

As a commission-processing company, Stead McAlpin printed designs for a wide range of furnishing fabric production companies. This results in a good sample of the stylistic trends occurring in the industry. Figure 6.124 shows the overall design trends for new designs printed. The majority of designs in the 1920s were tropical bird and floral designs, with a considerable emphasis on revival and foreign influence styles. In the early 1920s some very bright, dynamic Modernist designs were printed for Foxton and others (Figures 6.131, 154, 157-8, 171-2). A Modernist interpretation of period and traditional floral styles was common in the later 1920s but also occurred throughout the period. However, there were a range of different emphases in the interpretative approach: compare the Modernist bright colours and flat treatment of the 18th C. Jouy floral basket and parrot design of the 1920 Stonard print (Figure 6.129) and the more cubist interpretation of a traditional floral basket design by Liberty in 1928 (Figure 6.133). In the early 1930s cool geometric abstract designs became popular, with a peak in 1933 (Figures 6.138-9, 141-2, 187). This was followed by a sharp switch by most of the industry to very conventional rose and other floral designs from 1935-40 (Figures 6.143-4, 163-4, 194-5). In late 1939/ early 1940, nine classic William Morris designs were commissioned by Morris & Co., confirming the trend indicated by Alastair Morton (Section 6.2.3). More specific analysis of the commissioned prints of individual companies is given below and graphical comparison shown in Figure 6.125. It includes 57 ‘Rata’ designs, but it is not clear whether these refer to a particular company: no reference to such a company has been found. The company RD & S has not been identified. It ordered 53 designs of prints in a variety of styles, predominately floral.

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166 1923-5 diary, Silver Studio Collection, op. cit.
designs. The Turner company also cannot be identified: a Turner & Lewin design is also shown which may be from the same company. It commissioned 59 designs from Stead McAlpin in 1926 to 1933, of which a third were Modernist floral or bird designs.

6.4.2.7.2 Stead McAlpin Ltd. Commissioned Designs

6.4.2.7.2.1 Stonards Ltd.

Stonards commissioned the highest volume of prints from Stead McAlpin (463 designs in the interwar period). A majority were fairly traditional floral (201 designs: see Figure 6.164) or bird designs (82: see Figure 6.159). The Modernist designs (98) were produced primarily from 1926-40, many of which were Jacobean, tapestry, Indian or other well-established floral or bird styles interpreted in a lively and innovative way (Figures 6.129, 293). It was one of the few companies to continue to produce Modernist designs throughout the 1930s. There was also a range of 25 Modernist abstract designs, mainly in 1933, usually of fairly simple geometrical forms patterned with stripes, dots or other marks (Figure 6.141). There were relatively few pictorial designs - 13 Chinese, Japanese or Indian pictorial designs (half in 1923) and 6 historical scenes or scenes with classical references - but a range of other representational motifs were used, including 22 fruit designs, 6 butterfly or dragonfly and 2 squirrel designs. Stonard representatives were recorded as visiting the Silver Studio and showing interest mainly in large pictorial designs, such as Chinese magnolia designs and designs of a tree and water-lily pond with birds, flowers on a mountain (January 1923), a lyre bird (July 1924), a Moorish landscape effect and storks perched on bamboo (October 1924). There were also some traditional Jouy, Wedgwood, Grinling Gibbons and rose trellis designs and two Modernist floral designs. The company manufactured down quilts, cushions and 'Luiston' furnishing fabrics, exhibiting in the 1935 British Industries Fair.

6.4.2.7.2.2 Liberty & Co. Ltd.

Liberty’s were a retail company (specialising in drapery and house furnishing), a ‘converter’ purchasing designs and commissioning production, with block print capacity at Merton Abbey Printworks since 1904. It had become highly fashionable promoting

167 Ibid.
Japanese art and products from its establishment in 1875 to the height of the New Art style (Art Nouveau or Stile Liberty) at the turn of the century. They produced and retailed dress fabrics and silk scarves, as well as furnishing fabrics. A highly devolved structure of departmental power existed at Liberty’s, with no intervention in design by the directors:

‘Department buyers who had been too old to fight in the war, now fought on as King Canutes defying the changing tides. They were, in fact, kings over their own territories, with absolute power in the selection of their merchandise, engaging their own staff... No direction, let alone initiative, came from the directors.’

Alison Adburgham indicates that this resulted in a conservative approach to design, with traditional period furnishing schemes presented to New Rich in delicately tinted line drawings. However, of the Liberty furnishing textile designs printed by Stead McAlpin, the emphasis was more Modernist than period, with most designs floral: of the 236 designs printed by Stead McAlpin, 66 were Modernist (28%), 37 were British or foreign period styles, 45 were bird designs and 200 flower designs. Modernist representational designs were produced from 1924-40: examples include a strutting pink bird in 1928 (Figure 6.134) and a small bird and foliage design printed in 1929 (Figure 6.137). The lack of innovative designs before 1924, when the ‘Jazz’ designs were being produced by other companies (and low total of designs) is corroborated by the evidence of Hilary Blackmore, who noted that ‘not even the colourways of designs had been changed between about 1920 and 1924, let alone any new designs introduced.’ More conventional floral, Jacobean and bird designs were produced during the later 1930s, often on heavy cretonne (Figures 6.162 and 6.179).

6.4.2.7.2.3 Warner & Sons Ltd.

Warners was established as a silk weaving company, and specialised in high quality, traditional fabrics. Sir Frank Warner (the managing director) was highly active in textile industry organisations, while E.W. Goodale - managing director from 1930 - was

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168 1935 British Industries Fair catalogue.
170 Ibid.
171 Ibid., p107. Mr Blackmore joined the Printworks at Merton in 1926 and was works manager there a few years later.
172 He was Chairman from the formation of the Textile Institute in 1909 to 1918 and President from 1918 to 1920; President of the Silk Association from 1910 until 1917, when he was appointed as an advisor to the
President of the Federation of British Furnishing Textile Manufacturers. In 1927 a block print facility - Dartford Print Works - was bought from Newman, Smith & Newman (previously print designs had been 'converted', using a range of commission-printers), with hand screen printing introduced in 1932. The Stead McAlpin analysis (Figure 6.126) demonstrates the emphasis on fairly conventional floral designs: of the 222 Stead prints, 126 were floral. Following a visit by the studio staff to the 1925 Paris exhibition, a small range of 'sophisticated manufacturers’ cubism' was produced (Figure 6.138). However, examples of the conventional pictorial styles produced are ‘Kashmir Garden’ in 1926 (Figure 6.176), Chinoiserie designs and nursery designs of farm and foreign animals (Figure 6.314), ships and castles.

There was a distinct change in design policy during the 1930 depression, following the take-over of Ernest Goodale as managing director, on the death of Frank Warner in 1930 (Ernest Goodale was the son-in-law of Frank Warner, and had been a solicitor, but was introduced to the firm due to the sudden death of Frank’s son Cloudsley). He decided to increase the proportion of Modernist designs and emphasise this aspect of its production in the company advertising, since at a time of depression, the demand was for cheaper fabrics. This policy is shown in the Stead designs, with a sudden increase of Modernist designs in 1930-1. The strategy of a combination of reproduction and Modernist chintz and cretonne designs is demonstrated in their 1935 British Industries Fair advertisement (Figure 6.126) and a similar approach is used in 1936: 'The Warners range of fabrics can meet every decorative need, from the recreation of a historic fabric to the latest interpretation of the modern trend.' The 1938 advertisement implies a swing back to more conventional styles, though these could be interpreted in a loosely drawn Modernist fashion (Figure 6.294). A large number of Modernist screen print designs were produced by Warners at their Dartford works, many designed by Marion Dorn, but very conventional floral designs were also produced using this technique (Figure 6.194).

Board of Trade (on conditions and requirements of the textile trades after the war); a member of the Royal Society of Arts and assisted in the formation of the British Institute of Industrial Art.

173 Albert Swindell’s textile designs for Warner Bros. were described as such in Newton, C. & Young, H. Designs for British Dress and Furnishing Fabrics, 18th C. to the Present, Rothstein, 1972.
175 Advertisement placed in Decoration and The Studio journals in 1936, quoted in Bury, M., ibid., p62.
176 A list of designs produced by Warners during the 1930s is given in Boydell, C. Marion Dorn: A Study of the Working Methods of the Female Professional Textile Designer in the 1920s and 1930s, Huddersfield University, 1992 (PhD thesis).
6.4.2.7.2.4 Story & Co. Ltd.

Story was a textile manufacturing company that commissioned print companies, including the UTR for block prints and Stead McAlpin for machine, block, surface and a few screen prints. Their 1935 British Industries Fair listing emphasised this aspect, describing them as 'producers of original designs in printed furnishing fabrics.' Analysis of their designs printed by Stead McAlpin (201, with 11 samples missing) shows a significant proportion were clearly Modernist representational designs of a bold, painterly style, particularly in the early 1920s (31%; see Figures 6.154 and 6.177-8). Mark Turner and Leslie Hoskins state that the Silver Studio sold Story & Co. a number of the boldly coloured, loosely drawn stripe and flat stylised floral group designs in the years just after the war. However, by 1923-4 the emphasis in the Silver Studio designs bought was more traditional: high quality pictorial Chinoiserie and Japanese designs for the American market, historical Dutch and Indian floral design styles, a rose trail, a rose bouquet with ribbon and one of windswept meadow flowers. The main Story & Co. company design style shown in the Stead McAlpin sample books appears to have been floral designs, some with accessories such as a basket or vase, but generally in a fairly loose, painterly style, though showing three-dimensional shading.

6.4.2.7.2.5 R. Denby & Son Ltd.

Denby was a furnishing fabric manufacturer, based in Bradford. It joined the DIA in July 1930 (represented by F.W. Cadman). Their Stead McAlpin prints (196, 8 samples missing) include a significant proportion of Modernist representational (25%) and of bird designs (20%), but most were fairly conventional floral designs (Figure 6.132) of varying quality. There were also small quantities of Modernist abstract designs (Figure 6.142) and some crude nursery and pictorial designs, including a golliwog with a gun and Chinese monks with pink turbans and gowns.

\[177\] 1935 British Industries Fair catalogue, listed under 'Furnishing Fabric: Artificial Silk and Cotton.'

6.4.2.7.2.6 W. Foxton Ltd.

Foxton was considered to be the key fabric print company of the 1920s by Valerie Mendes, in using the 'foremost British textile designers' – Mackintosh, McLeish and Lovat Frazer - and producing some of the most exciting designs available.180 The proactive interest in design by Mr William Foxton is indicated by his leading role in the DIA (Sections 6.2.1-3). An intentional strategy of speculative investment in Modernist designs in the immediate post-war years is indicated by an article by Minnie McLeish in 1919, in which she states that she was a pioneer with Mr Foxton in this matter: that, although Foxton Fabrics were regarded in the trade as 'outrageously revolutionary, even crazy . . . the modern fabrics were a real, live, commercial success.'181 This approach of taking a risk in matters of taste and design was commended in the following month's issue of The Cabinet Maker and Complete House Furnisher: 'Mr Foxton . . . has the courage of his opinions and has been responsible for the evolution of a series of furnishing textiles full of vigour, life and originality.'182 A clear change in direction in the designs of Foxton is shown by the Stead McAlpin commissions, with the vivid and experimental designs of the 1920s (Figures 6.131, 135, 158, 171-2), as a narrower range of traditional floral designs were printed from 1935 (Figure 6.296), although Modernist designs continued to be produced during the 1930s (Figures 6.139, 187, 189-90). An emphasis on the arts and crafts approach of the DIA (rather than avant-garde Modernism) can be seen in their 1935 British Industries Fair advertisement, showing illustrations of 'The Inspired Block Cutter' and 'The Joyful Weaver'.

6.4.2.7.2.7 Ramm, Son & Crocker Ltd.

Ramm was a furnishing textile manufacturer and producer of printed chintzes, cretonnes and linens based in High Wycombe. Their Stead McAlpin commissioned prints (161, 9 samples missing) include large numbers of rose and other conventional floral designs in the later 1930s, often on rather heavy weave fabric (Figure 6.144). They ordered a high

179 1923-5 diary, Silver Studio Collection, op. cit., 13/7/23 and 21/7/24.
181 McLeish, M. 'About These Modern Fabrics', The Cabinet Maker and Complete House Furnisher, 10/5/19, p175 and p188.
182 'Round the Trade', The Cabinet Maker and Complete House Furnisher, 26/6/19, p455.
proportion of screen prints, many of which were pictorial, of Modernist and conventional style, with some Modernist fruit and floral designs in addition (Figures 6.188, 191-3).

6.4.2.7.2.8 A.H. Lee & Sons Ltd.

A.H. Lee were fabric weavers, printers and embroiderers,\(^{183}\) established in 1888. They specialised in high quality block prints, many of which were fairly traditional floral designs (Figure 6.180). The company maintained its policy of catering for the high quality even at the height of price-cutting in 1933: an unequivocal statement was made to The Cabinet Maker and Complete House Furnisher that the manufacturing house was concentrating all its efforts on improving the quality of its products in preference to lowering its prices.\(^{184}\) New ranges in needlepoint reproduction, uncut moquette, quilting and printed linens had been introduced at prices which, Mr Christopher Lee suggested, would ‘make many a buyer’s hair curl.’ The 86 Stead McAlpin prints from the interwar period include conventional floral designs in machine and screen prints as well as block (Figures 6.187, 295), though there are no historical designs with a stated stylistic influence, such as Jacobean. There are some notable Modernist and abstract designs, such as the ‘Bathers’ print\(^{185}\) (Figure 6.174), designed by Phyllis Donaldson ARCA and showing influence from the Die Brücke expressionist group and Cézanne.

6.4.2.7.2.9 G.P. & J. Baker Ltd.

The company was initially established in c1842 as a merchant for Turkish and other Eastern market carpets and fabrics, but purchased the Swaisland Printing Co. in 1893.\(^{186}\) It was well known for block prints of very high quality (Frances Hinchcliffe states that it was not unusual for 150 blocks and 30 colours to be used for one design), with an emphasis on traditional styles, use of historical sources and adaptation of historic designs, even in the fabrics they exhibited at the 1925 Paris Exhibition.\(^{187}\) Stencil printing was introduced in the 1920s and a few Modernist designs produced using this method, including a ‘Harebell’

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\(^{183}\) Modernist embroidery panels for upholstery with a Jacobean influence and moquette designs (one a Modernist design of running hares, one a 17th C. pictorial design), designed by T.D. Lee for A.H. Lee & Sons Ltd., are illustrated in Ionides, B. ‘Textiles’, The Architectural Review, Vol. 59, 1926, p185.


\(^{185}\) Illustrated in the 1928 Studio Yearbook.

\(^{186}\) Hinchcliffe, F. From East to West: Textiles from G.P. & J. Baker, V. & A. Museum, catalogue for exhibition 9/5/84-14/10/84.

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design in 1929. The process was replaced by screen printing in 1932. Analysis of the samples printed by Stead McAlpin indicates a strong company style emphasis on fairly traditional floral designs: 90% are floral (63 samples, 15 of which are missing). An example is Figure 6.143. Of the 43 floral designs, 4 of them were Modernist in style, 4 with butterflies and 3 with birds in addition to the flowers. No designs were stated to be in historical or foreign styles, though a traditional floral trails, sprigs and bouquets predominate. Modernist designs were block printed on commission for Cresta Silks, designed by Paul Nash and others.

6.4.2.7.2.10 Harry Wearne was a designer based in the USA, originally from the Carlisle area, who commissioned traditional pictorial and floral prints from Stead McAlpin (86 designs, mainly block prints: see Figure 6.173).

6.4.2.7.2.11 William O’Hanlon & Co. Ltd were textile manufacturers, merchants and producers of printed furnishing fabrics. An interest in design is indicated by their early membership of the DIA in 1917/8 (represented by Sydney O’Hanlon). They were the principal customer for batik prints from the United Turkey Red Co., with regular bulk orders. They also commissioned furnishing prints from Stead McAlpin (72 designs), mainly of established floral or bird styles, of moderate quality.

6.4.2.7.2.13 Franklin & Franklin Ltd. were furnishing fabric, quilt, bedspread and cushion manufacturers based in London. They produced the Knightrider Fabrics range, illustrated in advertising for the 1935 British Industries Fair with an abstract fabric and in 1937 with a combination of abstract and conventional floral trail and rose designs. The 1937 British Industries Fair listing stated: ‘The range includes every type of design and colouring suitable to modern and period furnishing.’ They engaged designs from the CPA: a silhouette design surface print from the Thomas Boyd & Co. Ltd. subsidiary of the CPA (engaged to Franklin & Franklin) was noted as having been accepted for the permanent

188 They were described as manufacturers and producers of cretonnes, warp prints, casement cloths, plain and printed window hollands, art silks and furnishing fabrics, including shadow cloths, printed linens in the 1933 and 1935 British Industries Fair catalogues. They were also distributors to the retail trade of Simpson & Godlee Ltd. ‘Judy’ range of fadeless cotton and art silk dress fabrics (see Figure 2.3)
collection of the Victoria & Albert Museum. Of their 78 Stead McAlpin prints in the interwar period, most were floral, of which 13 were Modernist and 7 foreign influence (French, Japanese, Indian and Egyptian). There were also 9 Modernist abstract designs, dating from late 1929 to 1934.

6.4.2.7.2.14 Newman, Smith and Newman

Newman, Smith and Newman was actively involved in the DIA from 1917, with extreme, anti-pattern Modernist views voiced by Mr Wilcock, the managing director in 1918 (Section 6.2.3). Half of their Stead McAlpin prints (42 total designs, with 4 samples missing) were bird designs, while 29% of the designs give a Modernist interpretation of floral and other styles (Figures 6.153, 155-6). These designs cover the period 1920-26: the company went out of business in 1927, selling the Dartford Print Works to Warners.

6.4.2.7.2.15 Small Volume Commission Print Companies

B. Bayspoole & Co. Ltd. commissioned 42 designs from Stead McAlpin in 1920-31, of which 36% were bird designs and 38% Modernist, many showing a Modernist interpretation of established historical or conventional bird and foliage styles. E. Haynes had 30 designs printed by Stead McAlpin in 1920-9, though 6 samples are missing. Most were old designs, updated (e.g. ‘Old Bouquet Fent’, ‘Old Pillar Curtain’) or conventional floral designs with Neoclassical accessories or stripes. C. Hodges Ltd. commissioned 26 designs from Stead McAlpin in 1920-29, all of which were floral, but 10 included birds and 8 were in a Modernist style. Witcombe McGeachin & Co. Ltd. commissioned 25 designs from the early 1920s (18 in 1920-2 and 6 in Dec. 1924 and 1925), of which 60% were bird designs (Figure 6.130) and 24% Modernist. Bayspoole, Haynes, Hodges and Witcombe all visited the Silver Studio to purchase designs, but have not appeared in British Industries Fair listings, trade directories or the Register of Designs samples analysed.
6.4.2.8 Other Furnishing Print Production

6.4.2.8.1 F. Steiner & Co. Ltd.

This was a printing and dyeing company of dress and furnishing textiles that produced the largest volume of registered textile designs after the CPA (719 in the January samples from 1920-40). The abstract Modernist design from 1921 was noted in a comparison with CPA furnishing textiles (Figure 6.108). The Modernist approach appears to have continued, as indicated in The Drapers' Record review of the 1931 BIF White City exhibition, in which Steiner's designs were highlighted: 'Up-to-date conceptions and modern designs will be leading features of the exhibit of F. Steiner & Co. Ltd.'

6.4.2.8.2 Simpson & Godlee Ltd.

Simpson & Godlee were textile manufacturers and printers of dress and furnishing fabrics and made regular registrations of their textile designs. The company directors were strongly interested in design: Francis Godlee was the company representative on the DIA in 1917 and Mr Gladwell was recommended (with Capt. W. Turnbull) for the Textile Sub-Committee of Manchester Art Galleries Committee by the FCP's Industrial Art Committee. The Silver Studio noted that they 'specially liked floral ideas' and chose a range of fairly Modernist trails and wild flower groups, a semi-abstract floral design and a pictorial Chinese design of islands and dragon boats. They also asked the studio to develop 'Verdure', 'Alice in Wonderland' and other sketches, and bought Paisley designs for their Quilt Department. They were regular customers of the Haward Studio for freelance designs, a studio that appear to have been known for conventional floral and historical designs; in about 1932 they gave the Haward Studio an order for over £1,000 worth of designs.

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189 'What to See at the White City', The Drapers' Record, 14/2/31, pxi.
190 In the 1935 British Industries Fair catalogue, they advertised a range of branded fabrics: Gazelle unfadeable casements and shadow tissues, linenised cotton and crepe dress materials; Rockfast cotton and rayon furnishing fabrics and curtain nets; Bevis rayon and cotton shadow tissues, reversible, duplex and rotary block printed cretonnes and rayon and cotton dress materials; Judy fabrics for ladies' and children's wear. The company was also active in export market styles: the UTR noted that there was keen competition from them in pintades and other styles for the Congo market in 1928 (8/2/28 and 2/3/28 minutes, UGD 13/5/6).
191 Undated note, Manchester Art Gallery, Industrial Art collection records.
192 3/7/23, 4/12/23 entries in 1923-5 diary, op. cit.
193 Ibid. Note on Paisley designs occurred in 6/10/24 entry.
194 Eric Gilboy (a Sanderson designer) referred to the 'Haward style' in his interview with Christine Woods (Sanderson archive). From the 54 design descriptions given in the Sanderson freelance design book, there
6.4.3 Conclusion: Company Design Analysis

There are some similarities in trend across the field of printed textiles in the interwar period. Highly innovative Modernist designs were produced in the 1919-23 period in both furnishing and dress prints. In dress prints, the proportion of abstract design appears to have declined during the interwar period (Figures 6.42, 71), while there was a sudden expansion of abstract designs in furnishing prints in 1932-4 (Figures 6.119, 124). However, the emphasis on floral design of a more conventional type in the later 1930s in dress prints also occurred in furnishing. There was a sharp transition to conventional floral designs in furnishing prints in 1935-8 (Figure 6.124). From 1935 onwards, most of the Stead McAlpin prints were imprecise red flower designs (Figure 6.144 is a better quality example than most), with a high proportion of rose designs (Figures 6.163, 195). Some design similarities between dress and furnishing print designs are evident (a loosely drawn stripe and a rounded, simplified flower form were often used), but in general there were clear differences in design between the two sectors. Dress prints were broadly Modernist throughout the interwar period, though a narrow range of conventional floral designs (usually pastel rose sprigs) was available (Figures 6.267-8). In furnishing print design, many designs relate to a determining substructure of established historical style types, though innovative designs and interpretations of the style types are fairly common. There is also an endogenous style apparent within particular companies. For example, MSF Ltd. and A. Morton & Co. Ltd. had a distinct emphasis on foreign and historical styles; Foxton was strongly Modernist in much of its production; Liberty took a moderately Modernist approach for many designs; Witcombe had a high proportion of bird designs; G.P. & J. Baker Ltd. predominantly produced floral designs, while Haynes and Wearne designs were strongly historical in style.

Style trends do not closely correlate to macro-economic conditions: no sharp alteration in design style occurs with the economic crash of 1921 or the 1929 crash and onset of depression in 1930. The gap for much of the 1920s of a sufficient volume of chronologically defined dress print designs limits the analysis possible. In furnishing prints, the main design response to changed conditions came in 1932-4, as demand (and were 25 floral designs, 10 historical styles and 4 foreign influence styles. There were also five Modernist patterns by James Haward in 1933-8.)
competition for market share) increased for cheaper fabrics. Advertising was used to demonstrate a strategic change in design policy and alter the company's image. Furnishing textile companies that had previously relied on a demand for high quality fabrics of a traditional type, such as Warners, Morton Sundour Fabrics and Turnbull & Stockdale Ltd., advertised heavily in 1933-4 with Modernist fabrics and graphic design (Figures 6.117, 123, 126). However, the design style applied was a development of a style that had been established previously: many of the abstract designs in furnishing prints of 1932-4 (and the combined floral and abstract designs) are broadly similar to the Art Deco abstract designs of the late 1920s, but have precise and clear-cut geometrical forms, rather than a free, hand-drawn style. There appears to be a loose relation between poor economic conditions and more innovative, Modernist design – or at least a higher level of abstract design – while the more prosperous, later years of both decades show a trend to more conventional design. However, market and fabric type also appear to be strong determinants of style (see Section 6.4). The view of Pevsner - that the normal manufacturer will not consider drastic changes in design unless there are adverse economic conditions, when a speculative effort on new lines is worth risking\textsuperscript{196} – appears to have been substantiated, though market popularity for Modernism rather than company risk-taking may be the driving factor. The business theory that cost-reduction rather than innovation in product or process will be emphasised in poor economic conditions has been contradicted.\textsuperscript{197} In the printed textile industry, new designs are constantly required, and design change is thus not a heavy investment. Cost reduction was applied to reduce price and combined with innovative design to catch the consumer's attention and stimulate demand. This approach was indicated by Hester Bury: 'Despite the slump in the early years of the decade, many firms experimented with new ideas and in some cases saved themselves from going out of business.\textsuperscript{198}

\textsuperscript{195} Oral history transcript of interview with Mr James A. Haward by Eleanor Gawne (archivist), 18/6/91, A. Sanderson & Sons Ltd. archive.
\textsuperscript{196} Pevsner, N. op. cit., p191-2.
\textsuperscript{198} Bury, H., op. cit., p63.
6.5 Structural Analysis of Design

6.5.1 Design Analyzed by Process

6.5.1.1 Roller Prints

Engraved copper roller prints are the most common, standard type of printed textile production process. Christine Boydell states that:

‘Roller printing was the mass production method used to print textiles at this time, and the same conservatism was apparent in designs produced by this method as in mass produced carpets.’

At Stead McAlpin, 84% of the total new designs commissioned were for ‘machine’ or engraved copper roller prints. Analysis of the Stead McAlpin samples indicates that the most common design type (48%) was floral (Figure 6.128). However, the significance of a proportion of 13% Modernist representational and 5% abstract designs in the period against a total of 13% for historical, combination and foreign style designs undermines any simple characterisation of the process as conservative (the remaining 21% were bird, fruit, pictorial, stripe and other designs). The most innovative designs were mainly roller printed, although there are examples of Modernist designs produced by each process. The earliest Modernist designs in the Turnbull & Stockdale Ltd. photobooks (in 1930) were in machine prints: Willy Herrmann and Frank Ormrod designs (Figures 6.147-8). Comparison of the roller print designs of MSF Ltd. with the A. Morton & Co. Ltd. block prints indicates the difference in style and subject matter: MSF Ltd. was predominantly floral designs, with a range of Modernist examples, while the A. Morton prints were mainly foreign or historical styles (Figures 6.120-1). Ferguson Bros. and CPA home market dress designs were almost all roller prints and mainly Modernist representational or abstract designs throughout the period: hence any clear differentiation in design by production method is principally relevant to furnishing print design.

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200 Stead McAlpin company archive: data taken from sample books.
201 ‘Foreign’ indicates a style type influenced from other countries, e.g. a Jouy floral basket design or an Indian trail design.
6.5.1.2 Surface Prints

Surface (wooden) roller prints, sometimes described as rotary block printing, were revived as a popular technique in the early 1930s. The process was discussed in *The Cabinet Maker and Complete House Furnisher* in September 1930 and *The Drapers’ Record* in February 1931.202 Mr A. Pether, the furnishing fabrics buyer for Waring & Gillow, stated the advantages of the process in April 1933:

‘The surface method has its own particular charm, due to the softness of outline and its great similarity to the appearance of block printing; also the colours are cleaner than it is possible to get in ordinary copper roller printing.’203

Surface roller prints were produced by Stead McAlpin 1920–24 and 1933–41, with only 8 designs between these dates. The lengthy gap indicates that the style of print resulting from this technique became unfashionable from 1925-32. Analysis of the overall proportions of different styles produced using surface rollers by Stead McAlpin indicate that there is no significant difference in policy in relation to style between use of engraved and wooden roller prints (Figures 6.151). However, the annual analysis of styles (Figure 6.152) indicates that bird and flower designs were the main style in the early 1920s period, centring around 1923 when they were most popular (Figure 6.159). The Modernist designs in the 1920s were mainly representational floral, but with bold colouring and a strong simplification of form (Figure 6.154). Most of the designs were of a soft floral type (Figure 6.164) when the style was revived in the 1930s, with some Modernist (usually a looser, more painterly interpretation of a traditional floral design: Figure 6.163) and combination designs (floral with scroll or other historical period accessory). In total, only 4% of new designs commission-printed at Stead McAlpin during the interwar period (see Figure 6.10) were surface prints. Surface printed designs were produced at Turnbull & Stockdale Ltd. from 1933—39, but in small numbers (see Figure 6.12). The designs were primarily representational floral (Figure 6.165) or historical (often tapestry or embroidery styles: Figure 6.166).

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6.5.1.3 Block prints

Wood block prints had traditionally been a high quality process, demonstrating the craft skills in precision of execution and subtlety of representation of the master printer (after a seven-year apprenticeship). This type of design is demonstrated in the A. Morton & Co. block prints, concentrating on complex Chinese, Indian or Persian pictorial designs (Figures 6.279, 281) or elaborate traditional floral designs (Figures 6.282, 280). The block print designs by Harry Wearne (printed by Stead McAlpin) also illustrate this style (Figure 6.173). A number of specialist block printing companies existed in the 1920s to provide for this quality market: The British Block Printing Co. Ltd., G.P. & J. Baker Ltd., Ramsden Wood and Campbell Fabrics.

A new meaning was attached to the medium due to the use of woodcuts by expressionist artists before the First World War, influenced later art students to consider block printing a valid means of artistic expression. This approach was applied to textiles in the vigorous block print designs of the Wiener Werkstatte (Figures 6.4-7) and the Atelier Martine (Figures 6.8-9). It developed as a favoured art medium in Britain during the interwar period due to its use as a skill for the printing press, taught in art colleges such as the RCA (a block print department was established in 1924 by Reco Capey). A number of independent block print workshops were set up by individuals graduating from art school, with several larger group workshops (Footprints, Handprints, Rainbow Workshop) and small companies (Crysede Ltd. and Cresta Silks Ltd.) established. Clear patterns of influence are postulated by Alan Powers: he suggests that the block print students at the RCA used a style of brown and black designs influenced by Phyllis Barron and Dorothy Larcher’s iron-rust prints until 1932, when the graduation show of Margaret Simeon introduced bright colours. Barron and Larcher developed a severe, Modernist style (mainly abstract designs) from c1924-5, while Modernist pictorial prints were produced by Doris Scull, Margaret Stansfield, Joyce Clissold, Reco Capy and others from c1926. An example of this type is Phyllis Donaldson’s ‘Bathers’ design for A.H. Lee

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205 Examples are: Barron and Larcher, Nancy Nicholson and Enid Marx.
Cryséde Ltd. had a loose painterly style, developed by Alec Walker, influenced by the work of Raoul Dufy and the Newlyn group of artists (Figures 6.169-70). Analysis of the Stead McAlpin prints (Figures 6.158-9) indicates that pictorial designs (see Figures 6.166-7) and combined styles (floral with an accessory, such as scrolls, indicating a historical style) were used to a greater extent in block print than in roller print designs. The most Modernist designs were mainly produced in the early 1920s (e.g. the wild floral design by Foxtons: Figures 6.162-3), while at the height of its popularity as a process in 1927 the Modernist designs are mainly interpretations of established styles (e.g. the Jacobean bird design by Stonard: Figure 6.169). During the 1930s there was a very low level of block print production at Stead McAlpin. The greater production costs (see Section 5.4.4.3.3) are likely to have been a dominant factor in its unpopularity, when demand was for cheap fabrics in home and export markets.

6.5.1.4 Screen Prints

Photo-stencil screens were introduced in 1911, developed further by Kodak and were first used commercially in France in 1926. A rotary silk screen-printing machine was patented by Mariano Fortuny in Italy before the First World War. The Omega prints, produced in 1913 by Maromme of Rouen, were made using a secret process, possibly a version of stencil or silk screen type printing. The first example of its use in Britain indicated from this research appears to have been Ferguson Bros. Ltd., who were using the process by 1930, as demonstrated by the 1930-3 special screen prints sample book. It is unclear whether screen-printing was used earlier: no details of screen printing rooms or equipment are noted in the minutes, although the Roller Rooms were substantially extended in 1927 (see Appendix 4.1). The process was adopted by the industry swiftly in the early 1930s, with a wide range of printed furnishing textile companies investing in the technique, including Edinburgh Weavers and the parent company MSF Ltd., Warner & Sons (hand screen printing from December 1931), Allan Walton Textiles (used screen

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207 Ibid., p54.
210 Ibid., p31
211 The process was developed in 1931, with the Sundour range appearing c.1932. James Morton established the plant as one of the first pioneers and Alastair Morton supervised the designs. Morton, J. op. cit., p407.
printing from its establishment in 1932) and Turnbull & Stockdale Ltd. (in the 1933 design book). Stead McAlpin introduced the process in 1931 (first print not dated, but late May/early June from sample book), with a series of six ‘Open’ speculative designs. In July 1932, Lee commissioned the first screen print from their own design, which was followed by a broad range of the other companies from 1933 onwards. It included Warner from 1936 and MSF from late 1936/7, although both companies had their own screen print production facilities. However, screen prints remained a minority production method: over the period of screen print production at Stead McAlpin (1931-40), screen prints were 9% of new designs commissioned. An automatic rotary screen-printing machine was developed and world patents secured by J.S. Wheelwright Ltd. in 1935, and supplied to the CPA. 213

There is a historiographical consensus that the screen print process was used for more innovative designs. Sarah Foster suggests that the widespread adoption of screen printing in the furnishing fabric industry ‘facilitated and influenced the shift to bolder, simpler patterns in a wide variety of fabrics’ in the 1930s. 214 Mary Schoeser comments that screen prints quickly became the favoured medium for Modernist printed design in the 1930s. 215 Christine Boydell states that:

‘Hand screen printing was introduced not by industry as a whole but by a small number of firms who were actively interested in improving design as suggested by contemporary design reformers.’ 216

She has also proposed that the introduction of screen-printing was responsible for an increase in the employment of freelance designers, due to the experimental possibilities of the technique for artists (see Chapter 3). 217 These views are supported by a statement by Alec Hunter:

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214 Foster, S., op. cit., p69.
'It is of great value for producing shorter lengths comparatively cheaply and in consequence has given encouragement to the production of more experimental types of designs.'

The early speculative 'Open' designs by Stead McAlpin appear to have been a range of pictorial, floral and Modernist designs (Figure 6.186, 'Crystals design'), although since many of the early screen print samples are missing, deductions are reliant on the titles ('Flower Groups', 'Giraffes and Gazelles', etc.). It is noteworthy that the only one of the six designs in 1931 to be taken up by other companies was Figure 6.185, a traditional trellis with flower boss pattern. The first designs commissioned show a similar division in styles, with the multiple-screen rose design by AH Lee (Figure 6.187), the abstract Foxton designs (Figure 6.187) and a Modernist pictorial for Ramm (Figure 6.188). The A.H. Lee design indicates a style familiar to a block print company, while the Foxton and Ramm designs were far simpler, in one or two colours. The continuing contrast in styles of designs that were 'Open' later in the period is shown in the conventional rose design of Figure 6.195 and abstract Modernist designs in Figure 6.196. In the designs printed by Stead McAlpin, screen print designs were used to a greater degree than other printing methods for abstract (11%) and Modernist (22%) styles, but also for pictorial designs (16%); see Figures 6.189-192. Use of screen printing as a commissioned order by a range of industry manufacturers, including those with no involvement with design reform campaigns, indicates that this process was not used solely as an experimental medium (see Chapter 5 for impact of cost on process use). The range of conventional and Modernist design produced by this medium is indicated by the pictorial designs of Foxton and Ramm and the floral designs by Ramm (Figure 6.193) and Warner (Figure 6.194). Although the proportion of Modernist designs in screen prints is high, the 'favoured medium' for Modernist designs in the Stead McAlpin prints appears to be engraved roller print: the great majority of striking Modernist designs in the sample books were machine prints.

The high proportion of Modernist designs in the Turnbull & Stockdale Ltd. 1933 screen prints implies that Modernism was associated with the new technique (Figures 6.197-202, 251-2). However, in 1936 and 1938 the emphasis moved to a more traditional style (Figures 6.203, 205), though some Modernist influence can be seen, in the simplification

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218 Hunter, A. 'The Craftsman and Design in the Textile Industry' lecture, *Journal of the Royal Society of*
of form. There was one Modernist leaf design by Aufseeser in 1936 and two in 1938 (Figure 6.206), but both the abstract designs by Feldman in 1936 (Figure 6.204) were cancelled.

Examples of furnishing textile screen prints from secondary sources and museum collections are given to indicate the designs produced at Allan Walton Textiles, MSF Ltd. and Edinburgh Weavers. A similarity in combination of curve and diagonal forms occurs in H.J. Bull’s balanced Modernist composition of 1932 (Figure 6.208) and Nance Ellis’s ‘Sun Ray’ a year later (Figure 6.201). The characteristic loose painterly brush strokes of Duncan Grant’s work (see the ‘The West Wind’, 1932, Figure 6.207) could be considered a signifier of the artist basis of the screen print medium. However, a similar style is evident in the block prints of Cryséde Ltd. (Figures 6.169-70) and in Ferguson Bros. Ltd. printed cotton (Figures 6.93-5). The MSF Ltd. design by John Chirnside (Figure 6.209) is more representational than the Modernist designs of Aufseeser (Figure 6.199), Dagobert Peche (Figure 6.20) and Christopher Heal (Figure 6.200), but fits a genre of Modernist leaf motifs. Edinburgh Weavers screen prints include Modernist abstract (‘Ashley’s Abstract’, Figure 6.210), nursery (‘Ben and Rufus’, by Ben Nicholson, ‘Sailors Return’ by Hans Tisdall: Figure 6.315), and bird, leaf and Neoclassical motif designs by Marion Dorn.

The 1930-3 ‘Special Screen Prints’ of Ferguson Bros. Ltd. show a similar style to the wax block/blotch prints of the CPA and UTR, with a batik crackled effect (Figures 6.211, 213). There are also some simpler designs, without this effect (Figure 6.214). It is a very similar design to the 1930 art silk print in Figure 6.89 (no process stated, but likely to be engraved roller print), but has less precision in its print technique.

6.5.1.5 Specialist Dye and Print Processes

Wax resist printing by UTR and CPA appears to have been used primarily for the West African market, and is thus defined by the tastes of this market (Figures 6.215-8). There are Pink and Purple Pad, Indigo and Acid Brown specialist dye process prints in the CPA 1919 Potter’s Style Book and a few in the 1930 and 1937 Potter’s sample books. The

Purple Pad designs appear to be mainly representational motifs (pears, grapes, corncobs, birds: Figures 6.236-7), while the Pink Pad designs are simple abstract or floral motifs (Figures 6.234-5). The Acid Brown prints are very dark, with minimal abstract pattern (Figure 6.229). The labelled indigo prints present in the Potter's sample books include designs of black leaf sprays, floral patterns or small flower sprigs on a blue ground, sometimes combined with geometric patterns (Figure 6.232). The UTR specialised in Turkey red and alizarine red styles (see Section 6.4.4.). There are a series of yellow and red prints with small conventional abstract and floral patterns (Figure 6.219) in the 1919-21 sample books and a similar range of terracotta prints, mainly with abstract designs, but no dye or process information is stated, so the technique of particular samples is unclear.

6.5.2 Design Analysed by Fabric

Design style may be related more closely to fabric type and weight than print process. Analysis of dress fabrics types and design style is possible with Ferguson Bros. designs, due to the range of fabrics used, illustration and description of various fabrics in advertisements and the categorisation of sample books by fabric type. The Stead McAlpin samples can be compared to give a rough correlation between furnishing fabric type and design style, but the fabric type of individual designs is not stated in the records (except for a few linen samples).

6.5.2.1 Dress

Voile is a lightweight fabric that was often used for fairly conventional or moderate, small-scale designs, as described in a Ferguson Bros. advertisement: 'Cool and sunny with dainty but definite designs in pastel and deeper tints.' The designs of dimities are similar, as indicated by the pattern book showing 'Voiles, dimities, etc' samples, in loose Modernist semi-abstract and floral dress fabric designs. The voile designs in the trial book covered a broad range from Modernist to conventional floral and abstract designs, but were primarily Modernist floral designs (Figure 6.71). The designs tend to be less intense in colour than other fabric types, with white grounds, blending of colours and less clear-cut forms often used (Figures 6.75-9).

219 DB 110/224, advertisement in Drapers' Organiser, c1924.
The Ferguson Bros. artificial silk sample books had a high proportion of abstract designs, supplemented by small Modernist and conventional floral designs, leaf designs and some larger Modernist florals (Figures 6.85-92). 'Suzette', an artificial silk fabric of very moderate price, was advertised in 1927 as being available in 'wide ranges of up-to-date designs'\(^{220}\), as 'the latest mode' in 1929\(^{221}\) and in 1932 as having 'New designs in lovely colourings - interesting modernistic effects - flowered patterns and a special range in fast washing colours for children's' frocks and lingerie.'\(^{222}\) A cheap rayon/ cotton mix, 'Juliette', was described in 1928 as 'An alluring fabric so rich and soft that many would mistake it for crepe-de-chine. It is printed in original modern designs and clean fresh colours.'\(^{223}\) 'Juliesyl' appears to have been used mainly for conventional floral designs, while 'Fergosyl' covered Modernist and conventional designs (Figure 6.72). Artificial silks were often used to imitate well-established types of fabric and design styles were therefore dependent on the finish. For example, Ferguson Bros. Ltd. advertised Eden and Solent Satins\(^{224}\) as suitable for frocks and lingerie, with conventional style designs: 'Soft and lustrous rayon fabrics of attractive sheen and substance. In plain fast-dyed pastel or deeper shades or in charming small neat flowered patterns.' The domination of conventional floral designs in satin fabrics is demonstrated in the trial book analysis (Figure 6.72). However, sateens\(^{225}\) and lawns\(^{226}\) were used for tailor's linings. The Ferguson tailor's linings have a very consistent style, with variations on narrow stripe designs. Percalines\(^{227}\) and marocaines appear to be cotton or rayon dress fabrics of a soft texture: in 1935, Ferguson developed Carsella, 'a special new marocain' with 'a good woolly handle' that has 'overcome the slipping defect common to many marocaines.' The marocain designs in the trial book show a high proportion of abstract designs. Rayon crêpe\(^{228}\) designs appear to have been divided by weight, with 'Caliste' advertised as the modern design fabric type: 'The modern designs and colourings give chic to any dress' and the heavier-weight 'Fersyl' as the conventional: 'In a variety of colours and dainty

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\(^{220}\) Ibid., c1927 advertisement.

\(^{221}\) Ibid., advertisement in *Drapers' Organiser*, March 1929.

\(^{222}\) Ibid., advertisement in *Drapers' Record*, November 1932.

\(^{223}\) Ibid., advertisement in *Drapers' Organiser*, c1928.


\(^{225}\) Ibid. Sateen is also a smooth fabric, but with the maximum amount of weft showing on the surface.

\(^{226}\) Ibid. Defined as a 'fine, plain weave fabric.'

\(^{227}\) Ibid. Percale is a 'closely woven plain weave fabric, often of Egyptian cotton, lighter in weight than chintz.'

\(^{228}\) Ibid. Crepe is a fabric with a crinkled or puckered surface.
flowered patterns, it makes charming afternoon frocks. The lightweight 'Fergoda' and 'Jessamy' crêpes listed in the Ferguson trial book were mainly Modernist in style. For an advertisement in Vogue in 1939, Chanel Crêpes were featured, such as the Crêpe Carlido:

'a firm-textured crêpe of the marocain type, printed with a delightful formal pattern and favoured by Chanel. Especially good for rather tailored Frocks and the new Jacket and Blouse ensembles.'

Silk prints were produced by the CPA at their Birch Vale works. These designs were generally in rather garish colours, with much cruder designs than the Potters prints, although more expensive fabric has been used (Figures 6.48-55). Many of these designs were fairly conventional in style type: Chinoiserie, rose designs, paisley, stripes, spots, etc. By comparison, Cryséde and Cresta block prints on silk were in a painterly, Modernist style (Figure 6.169-70).

Printed cotton designs at Ferguson Bros. were Modernist in style, often in painterly abstract or floral designs (Figures 6.93-102). The trial book analysis shows a difference in style between the poplin, slub and Carol cambric designs, with a greater proportion of abstract and Modernist floral design in the cotton slub and poplin fabrics (Figure 6.72). The CPA Engraving Book designs also appear to have been cotton prints, and are mainly of an innovative, Modernist style.

Fergotex was a linen finish fabric produced by Ferguson Bros. Ltd. There are a smaller range of designs in the sample book, mainly unadventurous floral, abstract and nursery designs (Figures 6.103-5, 311). Analysis of the trial book designs for Fergotex and Ferlotta (included in the Fergotex sample book) show a predominantly of floral designs of a range of Modernist (often bright, banded small flowers) and conventional styles and a collection of nursery prints.

229 DB 110/224, Drapers' Record advertisement, February 1931.
6.5.2.2 Furnishing

Mary Schoeser comments that prints followed the trend in woven textiles during the 1930s for an increasing emphasis on variations in texture, weight and density by using heavily textured base-cloths.\textsuperscript{230} The Stead McAlpin design analysis supports this theory of a change in base-cloths, with a greater proportion of heavy cotton and linen base-cloths used in the late 1930s and some patterned weaves (Figure 6.139). There is a differentiation in design style related to the weight and texture of the base-cloth. Broadly, the heavier fabrics at Stead McAlpin tend to have traditional Jacobean (Figure 6.179) or floral patterns (Figures 6.144, 162, 164), of a fairly crude type, although there are some simple abstract patterns (Figures 6.141-2). The medium weight cretonnes\textsuperscript{231} have a very broad range of Modernist and more traditional designs. The chintz\textsuperscript{232} fabrics and lightweight, smooth-surfaced cretonnes are suited to the Modernist brush-mark style (Figure 6.207) and subtle naturalistic effects (Figure 6.180).

\textsuperscript{230} Schoeser, M. & Rufey, C. op. cit., p181.
\textsuperscript{231} Defined as 'a printed fabric, usually a cotton furnishing, which is heavier than chintz,' in The Ansley Weston Guide to Textile Terms, op. cit.
\textsuperscript{232} Ibid. Defined as 'a closely woven, lustrous, plain weave cotton fabric that has been friction calendered or glazed.'
6.5.3 Design Analysed by Market

Designs intended for specific home or export markets will be investigated to ascertain whether there were distinct differences in taste between different groups of consumers, or perceptions of different consumer demand by manufacturers or merchants.

6.5.3.1 Export Market Design

6.5.3.1.1 Dress Fabrics

Some markets, such as West Africa and India, had highly specific styles which any export merchant or print company interested in that market would adopt. This is demonstrated by the production of style types, referred to in the list of styles produced in 1919 at Potters in the CPA. These include: 'Delhi Plates, Indian Borders, Indian Blotch, Dutch Indigos, African Fancies, African Blotches, African Acid Browns, Egyptian Fancies and Egyptian Fancy Indigo Discharges.' These special styles are also referred to in relation to sales contracts for agents: in January 1926, Messrs Parry & Watkins are to represent three companies within the CPA in British South Africa (except Rhodesia) on a commission of 2.5% for Egyptian styles, 1.25% for Native styles and 2% for handkerchiefs. For a few of the Potters samples in 1919, 1930 and 1937 there are notes on the destination. A very clear difference in market style within the same process type occurs between African and Indian Blotch prints: the African prints are abstract Modernist designs of intense colours, particularly blue and orange (Figures 6.215-6), while the Indian design is smaller in scale, with representational sporting or leisure motifs (Figure 6.233). A range of African fancy prints were also present – red designs combining conventional floral and geometric motifs (Figure 6.230) and occasionally others, such as the purple feet print (Figure 6.228). This is similar to the ‘Hands and Fingers’ design originally produced in c1904 by the Haarlem Cotton Company for the Gold Coast market but continuing in production to the 1990s. Some Egyptian indigo designs are shown - a small check pattern, a loose flower outline and small flowers in circles (Figure 6.232) - though most of the indigo samples have no

233 Matlock Record Office, Location 2158/1, D1589 Notes on the CPA and Dinting Vale by J.G. Hurst, 1914-33.
234 M75/ Director's Minute Book No. 9, 5/1/26.
235 Picton, J. The Art of African Textiles: Technology, Tradition and Lurex, Lund Humphries, 1995 (for Barbican Art Gallery exhibition, 21/9/-10/12/95, p28. These designs, registered by their agent Ebenezer Brown Flemming of Glasgow, were acquired in 1939 by the CPA when the Brown Flemming company was
market noted. The Egyptian fancy prints are similar to the check print, with small scale, dense geometric pattern (Figure 6.231). Pink and Purple Pad (Figures 6.234-7) and Black and Chocolate Cover styles were Persian market specialities.

The United Turkey Red minutes indicate the broad types of goods produced for different markets, with some specific examples. For example, Alizarine Red, Pink and White Sarries were ordered from Madras while Karachi took plain red twills, gagrahs and sarries. In March 1926, there was a report from Mr Graham senior (probably from Graham’s Trading Co. Ltd. of Manchester, a shipping merchant to India), stating that ‘generally, prints were out of fashion in the Bombay market.’ Belgium was a steady market for high volumes of handkerchiefs while Roumania required handkerchiefs of a style peculiar to their market. Persia (Iran) gave large orders for shawls (10-20,000 dozen at a time from one merchant); an example order in February 1925 was 7,000 lps Checks, Tannins and Para Browns, 3,000 lps handkerchiefs and shawls and 2,000 lps plain and fringed scarves.

Examples are given of patterns sold at the consignment auctions in China, in comments on the change in prices reached: ‘Seven Sisters’ are quoted as having reached 11.08d/yd, ‘Golden Dragon’ 10.5d/yd and ‘Pahshindoo’ 6d/yd in December 1921, ‘Tiger and Boy’, ‘Woman and Frog’ and ‘Pahshindoo’ are mentioned in September 1922, ‘Fisherman’ in May 1926, ‘Seven Sisters’ in March 1930 and ‘Buddha’ in December 1935 and February 1936. These examples indicate that high quality pictorial designs were sold in this market, as well as the plain black and ‘December grey’ dyed goods noted in May and December 1921. They are likely to be ‘Para’ or Turkey Red prints, since they were ordered through ‘B’ department. These prints appear to be more pictorial in emphasis than to the British figured brocades Zoë Munby states were exported to the Chinese market from taken over by Graftons. The ‘Hands and Fingers’ design was stated to be still in production (by A. Brunnenschweiler & Co.) at the time of the exhibition.

236 UG D 13/5/6, 11/3/26.
237 Ibid., 24/1/25.
238 Ibid., 11/2/25.
239 UG D 13/5/6, Directors’ and Heads of Departments’ Minute Book, 14/12/21.
240 Ibid., 9/22.
241 Ibid., 19/5/26.
242 UG D 13/5/7, Directors’ and Heads of Departments’ Minute Book, 12/3/30.
243 Ibid., 12/35 and 10/2/36.
1870-1930, in which the conventional subjects used were blossom, chrysanthemums, bamboo, cranes, medallions and swastikas and occasional images of Chinese people, often derived from designs supplied by Chinese intermediaries. There are several export print samples of the 1913-17 period at the Manchester Museum of Science and Industry, produced by the China and Japan market section of the CPA, which may be closer in design style to this group. Two designs show a pale, single colour naturalistic flower on white ground (at the high price of 5d/yd): the other has a black trellis and simple flower form on blue vertical stripes.

The UTR samples from the National Museum of Scotland, produced c.1920, include a number of similar yellow, red and black prints (Figure 6.219). There is also a selection of prints very similar to the African Blotch abstracts in the 1919 Potter sample book (Figures 6.217-8). Blue ground and two colour Congo prints were ordered through Belgium in May 1925. This particular category of 'Congo print design' had very high sales in the following months, including 2360 lumps in January 1926. A monopoly in indigo and alizarine red sarongs was negotiated with the African and Eastern Trade Corporation in February 1927. Pintades became popular in the Congo market during 1927-8 (with strong competition from Simpson & Godlee). A proactive approach to design in West Africa is indicated in Feb 1930, with 'new styles and designs being established through Manchester and repeat business forthcoming.' Examples of this is the note in July 1931 that good repeat orders were coming for two new picture designs for West Africa, 'Eye and Earth' and 'Six Foot of Earth', provided by United Africa Co. Picture print orders continued in December 1931, January 1932 and March 1933. Kangas were another African speciality, particularly in East Africa. They are large, rectangular pieces of fabric, worn

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246 UGD 13/ 5/ 6, Directors' and Heads of Departments' Minute Book, May 1925.
247 Ibid., January 1926.
248 Ibid., 9/2/27.
249 Ibid.
250 Ibid., 12/2/30.
251 UGD 13/ 5/ 7, Directors' and Heads of Departments' Minute Book, 8/7/31.
252 UGD 13/ 5/ 6, Directors' and Heads of Departments' Minute Book, March 1923: 'East Africa enquiring especially for kansas'.
as wrap-around skirts. However, by October 1935, the ruling prices for kandas were uneconomic, and there seemed no possibility of things improving.

United Africa Co. Ltd. were merchants that mainly exported to West Africa. They gave commission orders to Turnbull & Stockdale Ltd., as well as the UTR. These designs included several two-colour prints of large red or pink circles, some with zig-zag edges, on black (Nov. 1935, Feb. and March 1937), a bold yellow print with a red and black semi-abstract flower pattern in July 1936 (Figure 6.224) and a floral design in black on coloured ground in June 1938 (Figure 6.222), both similar to UTR print styles from 1920. There is also a batik style of pictorial print, with white lines on black ground, highlighted in red and blue (a butterfly design in Dec. 1935 – Figure 6.223 - and a turkey-type bird in July 1936). John Picton notes that commemorative fancy prints, designed to the order of the United Africa Company, were produced by the Newton Bank printworks of the CPA from 1928. These had detailed engraved portraits (e.g. of Nana Prempeh, the Asantehene, and of the Prince of Wales), framed by geometric pattern. G.B. Ollivant & Co. Ltd. (West African merchants) also ordered a number of designs from Turnbull & Stockdale Ltd. in 1935-6. Many of these were vertical stripes, diagonal line or check designs, in a limited colour range – dark brown, mustard, olive, blue and cream (Figures 6.225-7). An increased emphasis on quality of design and fashionability in the export markets during the 1930s is noted in Chapter 2. Possible examples of this are the pictorial batiks of United Africa Co., the ‘Eye and Earth’ and ‘Six Foot of Earth’ designs and the wider effort to develop new designs indicated in the 1930 comment by the UTR.

Controversy over the quality of export print designs surfaced after the 1919 DIA textiles exhibition, in which West African and other export fabrics were given a major role and highlighted as possible for use as dress or furnishing fabric in England. This received a vituperative racist response in the DIA Journal from someone signed only with 'B', who moved on to attack the popular jazz music and patterns:

253 Picton, J., op. cit., p28. He states that the literal meaning is 'guinea fowl.'
254 UGD 13/5/77, Directors' and Heads of Departments' Minute Book, 9/10/35.
'The patterns rolled off their machines which sell well in Nairobi cannot be regarded as making any considerable demand on English design. No matter how pleasing, or how profitable they may be, these designs made for Ju-Ju-Iand or Zanzibar are but derivative. Moreover, they are atrophying because exempt from the criticism of a civilised taste. And they will be nothing but a Western 'stunt' based on rudimentary design if, as the signs portend, these barbarous patterns become an American and European fashion. Barbaric rechauffés, in Russian ballet, coon music, or American and Manchester factories are indolent and reactionary: the future of British design lies not in the patterns of the jungle or the kraal, but in British sensitiveness and invention.'

6.5.3.1.2 Exported Furnishing Fabrics

The UTR minutes note in 1924 that Java kept a demand for certain old chintzes, one of which had been designed in 1863 (No. 18h8k) and a steady annual order of about 400 lumps per year of another (No. 7058). In May 1925 there were orders for 1000 lps of chintz. A decline in demand occurred, but in December 1928 it was minuted that the demand for Para Chintzes was reviving in Java, which were desired with Javanese figures. No examples of these designs are available. In 1930, the FCP commented on this market: 'the great increase in engraving [in the Java market] is more what you would call in the European types of trade. It is not so much that type of thing the Japanese are taking away from us.' Other export markets for chintz (Holland, Canada, China) are mentioned in the UTR minutes, but no details of specific style requirements are given.

The American market appears to have been specifically catered for in the designs by many companies. Story & Co. Ltd. ordered designs from the Silver Studio, many of which were specifically stated to be for the American market. These designs are often large scale Chinese or Japanese style pictorial compositions (e.g. a magnolia tree on a small island with kingfishers; magnolia branches with birds and hanging lanterns; bamboo tree and monkey, all ordered in 1923 and 1924). Traditional floral trails with Indian flowers or in French style with ribbons were also chosen.

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257 GD 326/60/15 'B', 'Getting Things Done', DIA Journal, Summer 1919. 'B' could be Beresford Pite, who called the modern style barbarous at a DIA meeting in 1931: stated in Pevsner, N 'The History of the DIA', DIA Yearbook, 1975, p46.
258 UGD 13/5/6, Directors' and Heads of Departments' Minute Book, September 1924.
259 Ibid., 12/12/28.
A number of American companies gave print orders to British companies, as shown by the Stead McAlpin and Turnbull & Stockdale Ltd. case studies. In the Stead McAlpin archive, there were frequent requests for block prints from Harry Wearne, a New York designer who came from the Carlisle area. Most of his designs were named after a British stately home (Dalkeith Palace, Montagu House, Ravenswood Park, etc.) and are strongly traditional in style, with floral basket (Figure 6.173), late 18th century Neoclassical, tropical bird and flower or picturesque ship designs. Carillo, a New York company, ordered a check line pattern in 1940. Morton Sundour Fabrics and AH Lee & Sons had New York divisions that commissioned printing separately from the parent company. The AH Lee prints were flower and stripe designs and a rosebud; Morton Sundour had designs of a magnolia, a red flower and a lighthouse with seagulls. There were also two prints for Marshall Field: a Spanish flower and stripe and a Greek statues pictorial design. One design from Warner was stated to be for the USA, a rose and tropical bird design (common since the 1830s). Of the designs in the Turnbull & Stockdale engraving book, there were seven 'engaged' by Lehmann Connor, USA in 1930 and 1936 and one by Thorp, USA in 1938. Four of the Lehmann Connor designs were based on an old document, two were pictorial scenes (The Swan and The Stag), a traditional stripe chintz, a rose design, an 18th C. bowl of flowers and scrolled frame and 19th C. style 3D box repeat with floral groups. The only one with a slightly Modernist appearance was a 'Hooked Rug' design with patchwork effect panels of flowers and loosely drawn lines in smaller squares. Overall, they were nostalgic in tone and elaborate in composition and in numbers of colours used.

A range of printed Morton Sundour Fabrics cretonnes (including 'Pleasaunce' by S. Mawson, originally designed in 1907), linens, satins and glazed chintzes, as well as tapestries and other woven fabrics, were selected for a 1940 advertising campaign.261 Argentina, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa were all considered suitable for the same range.

260 BT 55/18, Evidence to the Economic Advisory Council Committee on the Cotton Industry by the FCP, 12/2/30.
6.5.3.2 Home Market Design

6.5.3.2.1 Perceptions of Class Divisions in the Home Market

Bourdieu's theory of the opposition between economic capital and cultural capital proposes that taste is a product of habitus (i.e. cultural conditioning) and level of education\textsuperscript{262} - and thus that taste is class based. Is there any proof of a class difference in the market demand, with different style types for different sections of society? Mark Turner and Lesley Hoskins note a clear division in taste between classes during the 1925-40 period in home decoration.\textsuperscript{263} They state that printed furnishing textile designs by the Silver Studio were divided into the adaptations of late 18\textsuperscript{th} C. and early 19\textsuperscript{th} C. chintz designs (upper middle class taste) for Warner's, Liberty's, Sanderson and G.P. & J. Baker, while cheap furnishing textiles were produced in a cubist-inspired style (severe geometric forms softened by sprays of stylised flowers and leaves), popular in working class and lower middle class homes. A contrasting opinion was given by Pevsner, who assumed a separation between a taste for Modernist design by the upper middle/professional class and a preference for 'the bad, the meretricious and the showy' in the lower middle class: the prevalence of modernistic, rather than Modernist design, in industrial products is ascribed to the taste of the poor:

'In fact all these horrors would scarcely have arisen, had not the industrial development of the nineteenth century deprived the poorer classes of so much joy in life . . . the pleasure in vulgar and boastful design is largely accounted for by the universal and irresistible longing for escape.'\textsuperscript{264}

Difference in class taste was considered by Maurice Rena to be due to the contrast in living conditions:

'To justify some vulgarity, it is stated that the poor need bright colours. This is true, for gay colour-schemes are necessary to brighten up dingy surroundings, but I fail to see what stops bright colour being brought into line with appropriate design.'\textsuperscript{265}


\textsuperscript{264} Pevsner, N. (1937), op. cit., p11.

\textsuperscript{265} Rena, M. 'How Textiles are Made', The Studio, Feb. 1937, p101.
A 'revolutionary change' in the relation of design to price (and class) in dress fabric was noted by *The Drapers' Record* in February 1931:

'There was a time, not so very long ago, when a manufacturer selected his most costly and advanced designs for his most expensive cloths, and proceeded down the scale until his cheaper cloths carried the least expensive and original patterns. The first revolutionary change of ideas is that today the manufacturer, with a watchful eye on the consumer, is putting some of his most advanced and high-priced designs on to his low-priced cotton fabrics. In other words, producers have at last awakened to the realisation that fabrics sell largely on eye appeal, and that pattern and price are vastly more important than quality.'

The Ferguson advertisements indicate that cheaper fabrics were often in more Modernist styles: for example, 'Suzette' artificial silk, lightweight crêpes and the preponderance of Modernist designs in voile prints (see Section 6.4.3). However, cotton, which would have been the most expensive fabric, was printed in avant-garde Modernist designs (see Section 6.3.1.2). Ferguson Bros. trial book engraving prices give a loose correlation between the price and the number of colours in the design (Figure 6.238), though designs with a subtle watercolour floral design (Figure 6.265) or abstract overlaid paint marks, with mid-range number of colours, were also expensive. The cheapest designs were mainly abstract or representational Modernist designs of few colours, with a few more conventional floral designs. The most expensive were Modernist or conventional floral designs with subtle colour effects. The broad central price range (£12-32) covers the conventional floral designs, but also Modernist and all other style types.

The printing price of the order is dependent on the size of order, as well as technical factors such as dye cost, number of rollers and finish. The cheapest designs of the commissioned orders printed by Turnbull & Stockdale Ltd. were: a simple one colour, red dot pattern for H. Smith, for 1d/yd on 28th October 1935; a one colour red cherry print for J. Glen & Co. on 7th February 1936 (Figure 6.239) and an abstract two-colour design of intersecting rings for A. King Brown on 27th July 1936 (Figure 6.243), both for 1¾/16d. All these print orders were large — 100 lumps, 101 lumps and 113 lumps — and of few

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colours. The largest order was 423 lumps, from N.H. Kempton in February 1936, of black dots on a deep red ground, followed by a 359 lump order from John Glen & Co. (possible association with Glen Printing and Finishing Co. Ltd.) of a plain dark green dyed fabric. The largest commissioned dress fabric orders (indicating confidence in their popularity) were generally of abstract designs (Figures 6.242-4), though some large orders of floral designs were given by Joshua Hoyle & Sons (Figures 6.240, 245) and a few rayon prints, such as the example by Haslam’s (Figure 6.241). This implies that the most popular cheap designs (likely to be bought by the working class) were usually Modernist abstract designs of limited colours. The most expensive (over 3d) were: a 5d H. Tong print of Mickey Mouse on towelling (Figure 6.303); a Pawson & Leaf naturalistic floral design on rayon for $3\frac{3}{4}$d; a Middleton Jones/ King Brown semi-abstract leaf sprig design; and a range of Sugden, Nahons, Birtwistle and Middleton Jones floral designs, in a scribbled, hand-drawn, semi-realistic style, for $3\frac{1}{8}-3\frac{3}{4}$d, usually on fairly lightweight fabric (Figures 6.248-50). The intermediate price level was mainly Modernist floral prints of 3-4 colours, in flat colour areas (Figures 6.245-7).

6.4.4.2.3 Furnishing Fabric Home Market Design

Of the printed furnishing textile designs produced by the case study companies, most appear to be high quality products, aimed at a middle-class market. The home market of the UTR was traditionally the ‘working class districts’, with substantiation of this in minutes in the emphasis on orders by the Wholesale Co-operative Society and the close relation that changes in the shipbuilding and mining industries had on demand for chintz and quilting (see Section 4.4.2). However, no examples of UTR chintz or cretonne designs are available.

CPA furnishing prints were divided into those with the ‘Grafton’ brand name (which, although nationally distributed by a wholesaler, were marketed as a high quality product) and those identified as Cepea prints. The Cepea designs appear to be moderately cheap.
prints (few colours and a light fabric), with a distinctive style of vivid colours, abstract or highly formalised designs in the early 1920s (Figures 6.106-7, 109-10, 112). A similar style was also shown by F. Steiner designs at this date (Figure 6.108). Very few Grafton prints are available, but they appear to have had strong colours (though a little less intense), with stable rather than dynamic compositions and conventional signifiers such as scrolls, flowers and broad vertical stripes (Figures 6.111, 113).

The designs printed by Stead McAlpin for a broad range of manufacturing companies do not have an indication of the market. The majority are fairly traditional, rather crude floral prints on heavy cotton. A finer quality fabric or more expensive print quality (process type, colours, etc.) is evident in designs by A.H. Lee, Liberty, Foxton, Stonard and others. The advertising of some of these companies, such as Foxton and Warner, emphasises the quality of craftsmanship of their product, with medieval style woodcut designs of craftsman in their advertising (also used by MSF in their publications and calendars). It seems likely that a broad market range was supplied from the Stead McAlpin prints. However, a high proportion of the innovative Modernist designs were produced as engraved roller prints (the cheapest print type), implying that they were expected to reach a mass market (examples include Figures 6.131, 135, 139, 141-2).

Turnbull & Stockdale Ltd. furnishing fabric styles were aimed at a middle-class market. This is indicated in the marketing approach (distribution through department stores and an emphasis on English tradition and artistic quality in their advertisements), mid-level expenditure in print process and number of colours. They produced a range of historical (particularly Jacobean), naturalistic floral and Modernist designs. Analysis of the market popularity of particular furnishing designs is possible for Turnbull & Stockdale Ltd. prints from the 1933-9 photo books. The actual or predicted demand is indicated by the size and number of repeat, stock and sample orders of the designs (see analysis of orders in Section 5.4.4.2). The highest stock and sample orders were in 1933, for engraved print designs. Modernist designs appear to have been popular: of the five designs with 50-60 piece orders, three were abstract, two were moderately Modernist interpretations of traditional styles (a vase of flowers; Jacobean brocade) and one was floral, while both of the two designs with orders of over 100 pieces were Modernist (see Figures 6.251-2).
MSF Ltd. was aiming at an upper class or upper-middle class market. This is indicated by: the marketing strategy of association with public commissions of high cultural value (Section 5.4.5.2); the brand differentiation with cheaper wholesale fabrics (Section 5.4.5.3); advertising in *Punch* rather than women's weekly magazines and the advertising approach (Section 5.4.5.2). In addition, the cost of production (production process and number of blocks or rollers) demonstrates that the prints would have been an expensive product. During the 1920s these print designs were conservative, concentrating on very high quality pictorial scenes or naturalistic flowers in established foreign and historical styles. A range of cheaper fabrics (many of Modernist design) were produced in the early 1930s, as their exclusive market slumped. Illustrations in Pevsner's *Industrial Art in England* of three of the best selling MSF prints in 1935 show that popular designs were: a floral sprig design on a white ground; a leaf and chevron design; and the Sydney Mawson peacock design ("The Pleasaunce") initially produced in 1907. The Edinburgh Weavers fabrics also appear to have been aimed at a wealthy clientele, though with a radically different type of design to the main Morton ranges. However, their screen prints are likely to have been cheaper than the A. Morton block prints and would thus have been accessible in price to middle class customers.

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6.5.4 Designs Analysed in Relation to Source

6.5.4.1 Freelance/ Studio Divisions

6.5.4.4.1 Theories of Designer Employment Structure and Design Style

A Modernist disdain for company studio design is evident in contemporary comments, in which manufacturer’s interpretation of Modernist design was given the derogatory epithet of ‘modernistic.’ Noel Carrington asserted that:

‘When certain very talented artists introduced a geometrical mood into the design of fabric, wallpaper and other printed materials, they were influenced by the Cubist aesthetic of the painters, and though their designs seemed often so simple as to be revolutionary, they were the result of an extremely subtle process of assimilation. But when Fashion suggests to the manufacturer that the time is ripe to launch out with similar stuff for the big stores and he bids his studio to ‘roum him out a dozen of these jazz patterns’, then – alas! – we see what we see today.’

Pevsner used modernistic as a term to describe the style of ‘the crude patterns and blatant colours in commercial use’, prevalent in the carpet and wallpaper industries:

‘the dominant patterns for the last eight or nine years have been derived from a deplorably misunderstood Continental cubism, the prevailing colours being a brown, a blatant orange and, in more recent years, a grass-green no less blatant’.

Paul Nash described it as ‘a repellent title but uncannily expressive of the blasphemy it represents’, while a similar use occurs in Richards’ discussion of ‘nasty modernistic villas’, to imply a bogus and commercially exploitative product without the aesthetic appeal of a genuinely modern house. More moderate comments on studio design include the statement by Keith Murray that it was felt that there was a danger in relying only on factory studio designers, leading to a lack of variety, a ‘factory studio style’ and designers who become absorbed in routine and are out of touch with outside influences. However, this comment may apply to glass and ceramics companies rather than the textile industry, since Keith Murray worked in these fields. Pevsner, in his 1937 study of design,
commented on the printed textile industry that: 'there are in the studios of the leading factories some artists of the highest standing.'

A possible interpretation of the prejudice against studio design by Modernists was the sudden interest in the possibilities of freelance design by many Modernist artists and architects from c.1932, as the depression forced them out of their usual employment. Historiographic and contemporary discussion of design in the interwar period has prioritised the significance of freelance artists, architects and designers in the creation of a Modernist aesthetic. John Chimside, lecturer in Textile Design at Manchester College of Technology claimed that artists working freelance in textile design were the only significant creative force in textile design, while Fiona MacCarthy asserts that architects working freelance in industry had creative primacy. Christine Boydell comments that the employment of freelance designers enabled textile manufacturers to respond more rapidly to stylistic trends and produce a greater variety of designs. The source and style of designs in the case study companies will be analysed, with an assessment of the locus of design innovation and the selective, strategic use of freelance designers by companies.

6.5.4.1.2 Case Study Analysis

There is a distinct difference in style between the Morton Sundour Fabrics Ltd. company studio design and the freelance design they purchased (Figure 6.253). The London studio produced a greater proportion of historical and foreign source designs (based on the James Morton fabric library) and a range of Modernist and abstract designs, although floral designs were the most numerous type for both studio and freelance source designs. Two designs were provided by an Edinburgh Studio in January 1931 (a small Jacobean and a Persian stripe). The increasing proportion of design produced in the studio (see Section 2.3) demonstrates the significance accorded to the studio as a cost-effective way of

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277 The large-scale transition to commercial design areas by artists, following the collapse of the London art market in 1932, is discussed in Stephenson, A. op. cit., p41 and p44. The economic pressure forcing architects into design areas is commented on in MacCarthy, F. *All Things Bright and Beautiful: Design in Britain 1830 to Today*, George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1972, p109.
producing quality designs of the required styles. The analysis of A. Morton & Co. Ltd. block print design sources from 1917-30 (Figure 6.254) shows a similar approach by the studio, with the dominant emphasis on foreign styles, but with a small range of abstract and Modernist design supplied. A similar approach is evident at Arthur Sanderson & Sons Ltd., with a far higher proportion of Modernist design produced in the studio than bought by freelance designers (see Appendix 3, Figures A3.11-12).

The studio designs of Turnbull & Stockdale Ltd. were varied in style, with the majority either floral trails or Modernist floral designs. However, there are also designs with no designer noted (many of which are Modernist), which could be studio designs. Designs by the Misses Turnbull were Modernist (Figures 6.150, 197) or a minimal, flowing interpretation of Jacobean or floral designs. The designs by ‘SGB’ (who provided a large proportion of the designs and is likely to have worked closely with the studio) covered a range of styles, particularly naturalistic floral (Figures 6.165, 203) and including one of the most popular Modernist designs (Figure 6.251).

The CPA Engraving Book has some designs attributed to a particular designer (primarily Manchester and Parisian commercial studios), but it is not clear whether those with no notation are studio designs. There is no difference in the quality between these and those with designers stated: many of the most impressive designs, whether vivid Modernist floral designs or single colour green graphical designs (used for overall fabrics and often engaged to the CPA clothing subsidiary Brook Manufacturing Co. Ltd.) have no designer attribution (Figures 6.43-6). The Archive of Art and Design CPA pattern book shows variations of a design (spots, small squares, loosely drawn stripes: see Figures 6.56, 59) in different years, implying studio work. However, any overall analysis of CPA studio design style is not possible, due to the lack of attributed studio designs.

Ferguson Bros. had a studio and at least one salaried designer (George Cape) whose designs were credited to him in the trial book. His designs are Modernist and consistently the most striking designs in the trial book samples, with a style of bold, loosely drawn forms in intense colours (see Figures 6.256-9). Some of his outlined floral designs (Figures 6.257-8) are similar to the subscription style shown in the CPA Paris sample book (Figures

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6.283-6), though less crude. Designs categorised as 'Ours' in Figure 6.255 were listed as such in the trial book, and may indicate studio design (some also have designers noted against them, but very few designs have an engagement to a company listed). Most of the sample books available show series of designs or designs closely related in design style, which implies a studio source. Examples of this are the series of art silk bordered prints (Figures 6.85 and 87) and the similarity in style of printed floral (Figures 6.94-5) and abstract cotton designs (Figures 6.96, 102). A similar painterly approach occurs in the printed cotton designs at Ferguson Bros. and the block printed silk of Cryséde Ltd. (Figures 6.169-701), which could indicate a common educational background of the designers (possibly the RCA).

This analysis demonstrates that design produced in the studio of the textile manufacturer or printer is not of a lower standard than that of freelance designers. It is evident that some companies used their studios to develop a more Modernist and innovative profile of design than was possible by relying on the casual and chance provision of individual freelance designers. Larger commercial studios, such as Libert, the Silver Studio or Newbould & Haughton seem to have produced a sufficiently predictable volume, quality and style range for production companies to rely on them for a significant proportion of their designs. Individual freelancers were used widely by some furnishing textile companies, such as Turnbull & Stockdale Ltd. Many of the more avant-garde designs were produced by British female freelancers and some by a clearly new generation of designers, such as Christopher Heal, though there is not adequate data available on most of the designers to ascertain their age and art education.
6.5.4.2 Nationality of Freelance Designs

6.5.4.2.1 Theories of Designer Nationality and Design Style

An analysis of the national sources of freelance textile design and the sources of influence for new designs is relevant. General assumptions on the main sources of innovation and influence in textile design stated in the Balfour Report (see Section 1.1.3), the Design and the Cotton Industry report of 1929 (see Chapter 3) and other sources can be compared with evidence from company research. The 1937 CAI Report Design and the Designer in Industry reiterated many of the views of the Balfour Report:

'The dominant position formerly held in matters of fashion by Paris and Vienna seems to some extent to be breaking down. The British manufacturer has recently established an independent reputation in the field of furnishing textiles. On the other hand, manufacturers of short-lived articles like cotton prints, where fashion and market fluctuations cause a constant demand for novelty and variety of pattern, often find it impossible to meet all their requirements from their own design studio and are compelled to purchase designs from outside studios or French designers. At present the great bulk of design so purchased are obtained from foreign sources, and in this industry the British factory designers are mainly employed in adapting foreign design to practical requirements rather than in any original creative work.

In the fashion industries, there is a preference for design from abroad on the ground that fashions in women's dress are largely controlled on the Continent and that foreign designs are likely to be more original and to supply the touch of novelty which is so important as a sales factor. One witness remarked 'A firm which cuts itself free from foreign ideas and inspiration will cease to be a producer of novelties.'

In 1938, William Turnbull gave a similar summary of the source of design influence for printed dress and furnishing fabrics as the Balfour Report:

'The designs for this bulk [dress] trade are largely French or adaptations of the French. As to the furnishing trade, we find the conditions are different to some extent, in that there are good English designed fabrics to be bought at almost any price level.'

The Department of Overseas Development took a severe view of the design quality of British goods compared to their foreign competitors, based on reports from overseas officers from all parts of the world, trade missions and other sources (see Section 1.1.5).

Furnishing fabrics were noted as an exception, but in the minutes of a meeting with a delegation of Swedish businessmen, aspersions were cast on the design of furnishing fabrics in addition to that of cotton goods, rayon and silk piece goods, carpets and leather goods. A trade mission to the USA in 1939, led by the Manchester Chamber of Commerce (and therefore likely to be studying the textile industry), reported that:

"this feeling with regard to English designs and colours is so widespread that the good reputation of an odd English firm here and there is not sufficient to counteract a general feeling highly deterrent to a favourable expansion of services."

Pevsner indicates that the general opinion of British Modernists in the 1930s was that Continental design was superior in quality to British, giving quotes from Frank Pick, Herbert Read, Noel Carrington and John Gloag. The weight of this prejudice against British design was discussed by Mr R.P. Gossop in a lecture to the Architectural Association in January 1931. He remarked that he had been unable to sell his designs to a Manchester textile manufacturer, which had stated that they never bought English designs: Paris was the place that designs come from. However, the same company had been happy to buy his designs when sold by a brother living in Paris, who wrote to them in French. He had also seen a tablecloth design of his advertised in a window of Liberty’s as ‘The latest Javanese novelty’. The Design and the Cotton Industry report of 1929 made similar claims, stating that there was evidence that the freelance artist was more likely to get his designs placed if he commissions a French agent than if he tried to place them himself. A more positive view of national competition in furnishing prints was given in the trade press in May 1933:

"In prints, Britain has long been supreme, although there were always a number of Continental cretonnes, and various selections of French prints available to the buyer of exclusive goods. Even so, foreign prints made their appeal solely on grounds of design and colourings, as they were generally produced on a cloth so fine and thin as to contrast unfavourably with the more robust British product at corresponding prices."
6.5.4.2.2 Design Analysis

6.5.4.2.2.1 Dress Fabrics

A contradiction of the characterisation in the Design and the Cotton Industry report\(^{289}\) of the French as superior in dress design due to their aptitude for more delicate and dainty design (Section 2.4.1) is the generally bolder, brighter and less delicate design in printed dress design as compared to printed furnishing design. French pattern services and studios specialised in highly realistic floral designs (see Section 2.4.1), but produced a range of styles. The Moderne/ Art Deco style of abstract print designs was also a popular style, produced by department store studios (Paul Follot designed for the Pomone store: see Figure 6.17) and in pochoir prints by M. Vermeuil (Figures 6.14-5) and others. The CPA and Ferguson Bros. both made use of French subscription services. A sample book of such patterns, labelled 'Paris Atelier Collection. Handed to Designs Department, 10/1/35' is held at the Manchester Library Archives. The CPA collection from their Paris atelier shows heavy outlines and crude forms, with bright colours (Figures 6.283-6). It is unclear how influential this material was: a discussion was minuted in 1929, in which Mr Hewit was doubtful of the value of these patterns, but Mr Nield said he had found them most useful.\(^{290}\) The difference in sophistication between these and the 1933-7 Potter sample book designs is notable. It is unclear whether the 1923 and 1933-7 Fancies sample books in the Ferguson archive are from a similar collection of French fabrics or are genuine Ferguson production, since no design numbers or other associated information is given with the scraps of fabric pasted into the book. A similar use of very bright colours (fluorescent light green, pink), crude forms, large scale and poor quality of printing and material occurs in many of the 1923 designs (as in the CPA Paris sample book). There are also more sophisticated designs using the large scale and bright colours contrasted with black or in a palette of relating colours (see Figures 6.73-4) and some foreign influence styles such as tropical birds or an interpretation of Chinese magnolia. Presumably these samples were from a range of sources. Many of the 1933-7 fabrics are artificial silks, have velveteen textures, machine embroidery and may include surface prints in gold paint. Tootal Broadhurst & Lee also used a Parisian subscription pattern service from J. Claude

\(^{289}\) Design and the Cotton Industry report, pp9-10.

\(^{290}\) M75/ Directors Minutes Book No. 12, 13/8/29.
Frères, who provided sample books of French subscription patterns with notes on changing trends in dress fashion and colours.291

The cultural capital associated with Parisian design was claimed by Ferguson Bros. in their advertisements. In 1926 (when Paris would have been particularly fashionable in the consciousness of customers, due to the 1925 Arts Decoratifs Exhibition), they advertised to retailers in the Drapers' Record in the following terms, giving both a Manchester and a Paris address292:

‘In step with the Mode! You may show and your customers buy Ferguson Fashion Fabrics in the safe and certain knowledge that they are in style—right to the last dot. Ferguson designers are in close touch with Paris, noting every style trend, interpreting the smartest Paris ideas for the English taste and for the moderate purse.’

A very similar statement was made in the Spring 1936 Drapers' Record293, while the reference to Paris couture became overt in 1928: ‘the model sketched.. is indicative of the larger patterns sponsored by several Paris couturiers, although small florals and geometricals also remain fashionable’,294 and with the claim that dresses made from Ferguson fabrics had ‘that unmistakeable, expensive Paris look.’295 This linkage was underlined with the advertisement of sole production of cotton and rayon crêpes designed by Chanel, advertised in Drapers' Record in 1933 and Vogue in 1939.

Overall, comparison of the design style of national groups of freelance designers for dress fabric is restricted by the limited extent to which designers of the textiles are named in sample books.296 In addition, there may be designs produced by British designers sold by the French studios (as indicated by the Design and the Cotton Industry report, discussed above). However, the Ferguson Bros. 1939-49 trial book notes a designer by the designs (though some are illegible), allowing analysis of the work of individual designers or

292 M. Bonnefoy, 44 Rue D'Enghien: not mentioned in minutes.
293 DB 110/224, Spring 1936 Drapers' Record advertisement ‘Your customers cannot fail to appreciate the style-rightness of Ferguson Fabrics. At prices to suit their purses they are able to obtain a wide variety of materials which correctly interpret the latest Paris fashion trend.’
295 Ibid., 'That Paris Look!' advertisement, no date, c. 1930.
studios. Comparison of the design styles of company studio design against British and French freelance design is given in Figure 6.255. It demonstrates that the proportion of Modernist representational and abstract design was greatest in the company studio design (Figures 6.256-9), followed by the freelance British and lowest in the French freelance studio design. Sidney Plaskett (Figure 6.260) and the Original Designs Co. (Figure 6.263) did smaller Modernist floral designs, while Newbould & Houghton were mainly small conventional flower designs, with some more Modernist watercolour or graphical designs (Figures 6.261-2). The French freelance designs vary, but many are fairly conservative. For example, the Libert designs include motifs of pastel roses and small flowers, with some more Modernist styles (Figures 6.266, 269). Very conventional, small-scale floral designs were produced by the Parisian studios Schoch, Kittler and Mey (Figure 6.267-8); more Modernist floral designs from Schweitzer (Figure 6.270) and Vernier. Du Helder has some fine floral designs in watercolour or pastel, with a Modernist looseness of handling, but a three-dimensional rather than flat style (Figures 6.264-5).

Analysis of the CPA Engraving Book designers by national style is given in Figure 6.271. It shows a far higher proportion of Modernist floral designs by British freelance designers than French, with an emphasis on abstract and more conventional floral designs by the French (Figures 6.274-6). Newbould & Houghton supplied the majority of British freelance designs for the CPA (Figures 6.272-3), but cover a wide range of designs, from innovative Modernist to conventional rose sprigs. This indicates that the company chose design styles for particular purposes, within the range provided by larger commercial studios.

6.5.4.2.2.2 Furnishing Fabrics

Analysis of style difference between nationality of designers is possible for Turnbull & Stockdale Ltd. and the MSF and A. Morton & Co. design books, but very few of the Stead McAlpin designs have a designer noted (see Section 2.4.1 for analysis of nationality of designers). The designs purchased by A. Morton & Co. Ltd. from French freelancers were of the same style types, and in very similar proportions, as those purchased from British

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296 No designers' logs are available for Ferguson Bros., the CPA or UTR and few sample books have any designer details.
freelancers (see Figure 6.254). The exceptions were a greater proportion of French and Spanish, Portuguese and Flemish historical styles from Paris and of British historical styles and bird designs from British freelancers. However, within the same style type, there is a contrast between simpler designs of fewer colours by the company design studio and more conventional designs from the French freelance designers (Figures 6.277-282). MSF Ltd. engraving prints (Figure 6.253) show the greatest proportion of Modernist designs from German freelancers, but the effect of these designs on the overall company style was small, since there were only 6 German designs, against 123 studio designs, 57 British and French 26 freelance designs. Both French and British freelance design had a high proportion of floral designs, with a substantial sector in historical or foreign styles, but pictorial designs were a speciality of British freelancers. Turnbull and Stockdale Ltd. used mainly British freelancers, with a few German and even fewer French designers. There seems to be a loose correlation in specialisation in design approach, with Parisian design studios used for established traditional design types, British used for floral and a variety of traditional, pictorial and more Modernist designs while the smaller volume of German and Austrian designs was used as an avant-garde source. The more innovative Modernist designs were mainly produced by British freelance designers (of which a high proportion were women) or German émigrés (Aufseeser, Herrmann), while the larger and more established British and French freelance textile designers and studios produced a Modernist interpretation of conventional styles. The traditional emphasis of much of the French design noted in the case studies is supported by the broad trends in French furnishing textile during the 1920s discussed by Mary Schoeser and Kathleen Dejardin: traditional and Modernist pictorial toile designs, influenced by the 18th C. Jouy toiles (Dufy toiles shown in Figures 6.18-9); use of old 18th and 19th century fabrics and production of antique effect reproduction designs; simple traditional provincial designs of gingham and small flowers; and a range of bright stripe and boldly delineated floral designs, cubist designs and abstract and toile designs influenced by art nègre.

297 Freelance designers producing modern designs in 1930, 1933, 1936: S.Q. Cook, J.M. Dolan, Miss Nance Ellis, F(j)eldman, Christopher Heal, Mrs A. Holmlea, Mrs Gordon Hunton, G.R. Kingbourne, Miss E.D. Leigh, L. Malpiece Boucheral, Frank Ormrod Miss M. and Miss Edith Turnbull, SGB and Wheeler & Robertson.

298 Davidson, Frank Ormrod, Miss Passaner, J.S. Rigby, Simpson; the Haward studio, Silver Studio or the French Libert studio.

6.5.5 Conclusion: Structural Analysis

Finish and fabric type was a more significant factor in defining style than printing process. In dress fabrics, artificial silk satins and heavier crêpes were the most conventional in style, while voiles and cottons were predominantly Modernist. Furnishing prints divided according to the weight and surface texture of the fabric, with the simplest forms on heavier fabrics and subtle colouring effects on smooth-surfaced, lighter fabrics. However, the company approach was the most important factor: differences in style between companies are far greater than for different finishes, fabrics or processes. Screen prints had the highest proportion of Modernist designs, but were used for a broad range of styles by industry. The most innovative designs were often produced as machine (engraved copper roller) prints, implying that such Modernist designs were expected to be popular. Limited data is available from the case study analysis on the popularity of different furnishing styles in different markets, but the Turnbull & Stockdale Ltd. designs with the largest order size (and thus predicted popularity) were Modernist machine prints. The CPA and Steiner furnishing prints, which appear to be relatively inexpensive machine prints, are almost all Modernist, though some are Modernist interpretations of conventional styles. The prints aimed at a middle-class market could be highly innovative Modernist designs, but the majority fell into established style types. The most expensive furnishing prints (block prints with many colours) were very traditional, usually period floral or foreign source pictorial styles. However, the exclusive market was not entirely traditional in taste, since there seems to have been a restricted market for Modernist design in the most expensive block print fabrics, as shown by the expansion of workshop production by Barron & Larcher, Footprints and others. A change in furnishing print design for the middle to upper class market occurred during the 1930s depression, due to the market requirement for lower price fabrics: of Modernist designs and simpler floral styles production, supplied particularly by company studio designers. Dress fabric prints show a pattern of abstract designs in the cheapest and largest order prints, with floral or Modernist floral styles (often in a relatively subdued colour and a scribbled, hand-drawn style) for the most expensive prints. Expensive dress print designs (in the Ferguson trial book) had a greater number of colours or a sophisticated colour blend. Mid price range and order size fabrics included vivid Modernist and pastel coloured conventional designs. Export market dress prints fell into particular style and dye or process types considered appropriate and likely to be popular in specific markets. The most distinctive are the West African wax
block prints: the CPA examples produced by Potter's were particularly sophisticated in composition, with abstract forms and vivid colours. This type of design became controversial, due to its prominence in DIA exhibitions as a model of high quality Modernist design. There was also some specialisation in style of furnishing print designs sold to the United States and Java.

The influence of French studios as a source of avant-garde design is dubious for dress textiles: they seem to have provided a bulk source for a wide range of styles, although concentrating on fairly conventional floral designs. There may be some influence from French subscription styles on studio dress fabric design, but the most significant aspect of French influence was the use of Parisian couture as a reference point. The publication of annual colour ranges in Paris could have had a more direct influence on fashion, but is not referred to in advertisements. French influence is more evident in a narrow range of furnishing prints in an abstract Moderne/ Art Deco style, produced in the 1928-9 period (Figures 6.135, 138), though the French source furnishing designs were usually very traditional. In furnishing textile prints, a small number of German designers were highly significant in providing innovative design in the 1930s, but a range of British freelance sources were also used. British freelancers provided a wide spectrum of traditional and Modernist design styles in both dress and furnishing textile prints. Overall, however, the company studio appears to have been the most innovative source of design. The role of artists in freelance design is minimal in the case study sources examined, but Edinburgh Weavers did use artists as a key source of its avant-garde Constructivist range of designs.
6.6 Sources of Influence

6.6.1 Company Design Collections

Use of historic and foreign sources as a basis of design was encouraged by the formation of a Museum of textiles for the inspiration of his designers by James Morton. A business visit to India in 1920-1 to arrange a dyestuffs agency agreement was combined with collection of Kalimpong rugs, hand-block printing, sari fabrics, filigree embroidery and hand tufted carpets. Several Indian designs occur from 1923-7 at A. Morton, including one by Mawson (employed by MSF), while a Cashmere embroidery and Cashmere stripe design in 1927 at MSF by FR Gibson, ‘redrawn from Mr Morton’s collection.’ On his way back from an Austrian holiday, he also bought a collection of 300 Oberkampf ‘guard books’ of 1750-1900 from M. Guelle in Paris. There are a series of ‘old document’ French sources used in the block print designs of A. Morton in 1922-3. On a trip to Sardinia, probably in 1923, he was highly impressed with the local woven fabrics and later sent Anthony Hunt to Italy and Sicily and Leonard Elton to Spain to look for similar traditional fabrics. Inspiration from the ‘gaily coloured coffin cloths, with their peasant motifs of horses, human figures, birds and plants’ led to machine woven versions. A range of designs using the new weave were also developed, including a peacock design by Sydney Mawson, which was bought for the public rooms of all the Canadian Pacific hotels (not listed in design book). The London studio of MSF produced 9 Sardinian designs in July-November 1926, and 5 were produced by F.R. Gibson in February 1926 for A. Morton & Co. and a worsted warp Sardinian design by the Carlisle studio in April 1927. Spanish Renaissance designs came from a number of sources in 1928, including F.R. Gibson. James Morton made further trips: to America, when he collected Peruvian and other ‘native’ work and also prints on tapa-bark from the Pacific islands; to Paris in 1926/7, when he met the elderly Impressionist Ferdinand Maillaud and bought a number of his tapestries; and in 1929 to Sweden, when he met the weaver Marta Maas Fjetterstrom.

G.P. & J. Baker Ltd. also maintained an archive of historical and other designs as source material, based on a collection of 19th C. Swaisland pattern books acquired when they bought the Crayford Works in 1907 and added to by the directors on their business trips.

300 Morton, J. op. cit., p290.
301 Hinchcliffe, F. op. cit., pp30-1, 71.
Reproduction of designs from the collection was a staple of their print production. Notes by George Percival Baker on the use of these designs remain in the archive: on a book of sketches by Haité and Hudson, he left a note remarking that: 'there are some 2 colour effects of distorted root stumps in blue greys which appeal to me for present day screen work.'

The purchase of Brown Flemming Co. and its West African market design collection by Grafton in 1939 also demonstrates the importance attached to archival collections for reproduction and design inspiration. The CPA maintained a library and intelligence bureau in the Design department from 1925, to which information on designs, styles, processes, etc. were to be forwarded: this may have included designs used as source influence. Subscription patterns were, however, intended to be a design source and briefing on fashion trends, influencing the company's design style for the following season. The purchase of Parisian subscription patterns was standard practice for manufacturers and printers producing dress fabrics (see Sections 5.4.3.3.1.1 and 2.4.1). Some furnishing textile companies also used subscription services as a design influence: Morton Sundour Fabrics subscribed to the pattern service of International Textiles at a rate of £50 8s per year from the 1st January 1936.

6.6.2 Transmission of ideas by Designers and Managers

Patterns of influence were formed by the movement of designers across Europe, between studios as freelancers, and in the promotion of independent designers in exhibitions. Fabric and wallpaper producing companies often bought a significant proportion of their freelance designs from other European countries. Many designers spent part of their training in a different European country - for example, Morris Dupont of Paris sent his son Mars to the Silver Studio in England for a year's apprenticeship. Alec Walker of Crysede Ltd. in Cornwall 1925 was very influenced by his friendship with Raoul Dufy, in his production of loose painterly prints of intense colour. An influx of German and Austrian designers to the British textile and wallpaper industries in the inter-war period included Mea Angerer, a designer at the Wiener Werkstatte in Vienna. She acted as a freelance designer to Sandersons in the early 1920s and was invited to become head designer of Eton Rural Fabrics in 1928. Other designers moved to escape from Nazism, such as Margaret

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302 Ibid., p31. Wendy Hefford states that the note appears to the same date as one marked Mar/39.
303 Picton, J. op. cit., p27.
304 M75/ 1922-28 / 69 Letter to managers announcing the proposed Bureau, 27/11/25.
Leischner from the Bauhaus (trained under Gunta Stoltz at Dessau) who came to England initially as a freelance designer of fabric for particular industrial purposes and became head of the weaving school at the Royal College of Art. This was supplemented by artists inspired by 'post-impressionism' or Modernist art, who made the transition across to designing for the textiles industries. These included Duncan Grant and Vanessa Bell at Allan Walton Textiles; Ben Nicholson and Barbara Hepworth at Edinburgh Weavers; Paul Nash in Footprints, Cresta, G.P. and J. Baker and The Old Bleach Linen Company; and the Royal College of Art students who sold their work in the Dunbar Hay Ltd. shop. Cross-fertilisation occurred with the multiplicity of different freelance connections between companies, and movement of studio heads, with the change in artistic direction that implies. Alec Hunter (who started Edinburgh Weavers) became head of production and a designer at the main Warner's site and Theo Moorman, who developed Modernist rug design at Heals in the early twenties, became head of hand weaving at Warners. Business connections by directors could also have an influence on design. Ivan Sanderson was director of the Uxbridge fabric printing works of Sandersons and Chairman of the Waring & Gillow department store, allowing an interchange of designers and design ideology.306 Waring & Gillow became bankrupt in c1930, and J.H. Brackenridge (a director of Morton Sundour Fabrics Ltd.) was requested by the other creditors to become Managing Director and Vice-President and accepted the position.307

6.6.3 The Influence of Exhibitions

Some exhibitions had a clearly demonstrable influence on textile design, initiating a fashion for a particular style. The exhibition of Egyptian artefacts from Tutankamun's tomb in 1923 and the 1931 Persian Art exhibition at the Royal Academy (see Section 6.7.2) illustrate this pattern. In both cases, manufacturers and retailers responded by highlighting relevant examples in the current ranges as well as producing new designs, but while the Egyptian influence on design was a short-lived phenomenon, the Persian style was well established as a style in furnishing textiles previous to the exhibition. Exhibitions of Scandinavian design were significant as a broader design influence, but had a less discernible effect on printed textile design. The Modernist Swedish arts and crafts

306 Eric Gilboy oral history transcript, op. cit..
exhibited at Dorland Hall in 1931 were given model status by design campaigners, although the July 1930 exhibition in Stockholm was not received entirely favourably (Frank Pick considered it 'pretentious and untrue to itself').

The 1925 Paris International Exhibition had a very strong influence on style, while the Leipzig International in 1927 had a dispiriting effect on DIA campaigners (Section 6.3.4). The other major Empire Exhibitions (British Empire Exhibition in 1924, British Empire Exhibition at Johannesburg, 1936 and British Empire Exhibition at Glasgow, 1938) and International Exhibitions (Paris International in 1937) appear to have had a less direct effect on design. New trends became evident in these and in the trade exhibitions such as the annual British Industries Fair and the Ideal Home Exhibitions, where a broader selection of contemporary design was on display, thus having an effect on consumers and retail buyers. The separate textile exhibition at the White City in the 1931 British Industries Fair was a spectacular demonstration of the design ability and originality of British textiles, which was particularly effective in persuading home buyers to order British rather than rely on foreign sources for 'novelties' and high quality design. This exhibition was followed by a 'Buy British' campaign, publicised by the Empire Marketing Board, promoted by the Prime Minister and adopted enthusiastically by many retailers and wholesalers (assisted by the suspension of the gold standard). Smaller commercial exhibitions, usually in department stores, were also influential (Section 6.6.5), especially the Mansard Gallery ‘Exhibition of French Art 1914-1919’ at Heals in 1919 and the 1928 exhibition by Serge Chermayeff at the Waring & Gillow store. Sonia Delaunay's 'Future of Fashion' show at Claridge's Hotel was also significant in the transposition of Modernist Abstraction in art to textile design. Small gallery exhibitions of one person's work were significant, such as 'Room and Book', a small exhibition emphasising the

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308 For example, Thomson, G.M. 'Rooms with Light and Space', *Good Housekeeping*, June 1931. A statement on the Swedish partnership between artists and manufacturers by Dr Gregor Paulsson is given in Dowling, H.G. *A Survey of British Industrial Arts*, F. Lewis (Publishers) Ltd., 1935, Appendix C, since 'Sweden has won such international renown in the Industrial Arts.'

309 GD 326/ 60/ 29, DIA Quarterly Journal, July 1930.

310 167,259 home buyers visited the exhibition, 4,854 overseas buyers and 34,679 general public: *The Drapers' Record*, 7/3/31, p17. The exhibition 'stimulated demand for the home trade' and was 'an unqualified success' so far as orders were concerned, with remarks from buyers such as: 'There are eloquent signs that Lancashire has realised that novelty and invention have been coming from abroad for too long... It is clear the importance of the designer is recognised.' (dress buyer of 30 years experience): *The Drapers' Record*, 28/2/31, pp27 and 35.


relation between design and art by Paul Nash at the Zwemmer Gallery in 1932, or the exhibition of Rebecca Crompton’s innovative Modernist embroidery at the Batsford Gallery in 1936.

The visibility of 'design' was high in this period, due to the frequency of major exhibitions on 'industrial art' by culturally important institutions. There was a concerted attempt by concerned bodies to improve the taste of the mass-market, by promoting 'modern' or 'good' design. This particular educational urge in support of the new aesthetic principles began with the exhibitions of the DIA. In March 1917, the DIA had an exhibition at the Whitechapel Art Gallery, including a range of cotton fabrics for the West African trade by Bentinck Mills. These textiles were praised by a number of journals. A major textile exhibition was arranged in Manchester Art Gallery in 1919, which attracted 25,660 visitors and remained open for an additional two weeks due to its popularity (Section 6.3.4). Further DIA exhibitions included a collaboration with Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery in 1934 to produce a Midland Industrial Art Exhibition and smaller displays in co-operation with retailers. Exhibitions by the British Institute of Industrial Art, such as the exhibition of Modernist English and Continental embroidery at the Victoria and Albert Museum in 1932, were intended to have an educational value in improving design standards. The exhibition of 'British Industrial Art in Relation to the Home' at Dorland Hall in 1933, the 1934 Dorland Hall 'Exhibition of Contemporary Industrial Design in the Home', the Gidea Park 'Modern Homes' exhibition in 1934 and 'Exhibition of Everyday Things' in 1936 by the RIBA (which came to Manchester); and the Royal Academy/ Royal Society of Arts collaboration 'British Art in Industry' in 1935 were all specifically organised for the purpose of showing 'good' British Modernist design.

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315 Pevsner, N. 'History of the DIA', DIA Yearbook 1975, p42.
316 GD 325/60/15, DIA Journal, Summer 1919.
318 It was organised by Christopher Hussey of Country Life, who was inspired by the Gorell report, with Lord Gorell as chairman and Frank Pick as vice-chair. Powers, A. ‘Oliver Hill as Exhibition Designer’, The Thirties Society Journal, No. 7, pp29-39.
An effort to promote inexpensive goods of high quality design resulted in the Whitechapel Art Gallery 'Exhibition of Household Things' in 1920. Affordability of good design was promoted in an exhibition in the autumn of 1929 arranged by the British Institute of Industrial Art of 'Industrial Art for the Slender Purse' at South Kensington: the test of selection was:

'articles exhibited must be offered for sale at prices which, having regard to their object and function, are not disproportionate to the means of the great mass of purchasers.'

The 1932 Gorell Report emphasised that in exhibitions of design, due regard must be 'paid to the purchasing power of the householder of moderate means', although criticisms of elitism in the choice of products shown were made of the exhibitions at Dorland Hall in 1933 and 1934 and of the 1935 Royal Academy Exhibition of British Art in Industry, co-ordinated by the Council of Art and Industry. A flaw in the selection procedures was that special designs produced for the exhibition were guaranteed acceptance. A similar emphasis on affordability of design was taken by the DIA with the exhibition of model houses, furnished for under £200, in Manchester (1933), Welwyn (1933) and Birmingham (1934). In 1936 two exhibition flats were opened (by the Minister of Housing, Sir Kingsley Wood), produced in co-operation with the Manchester City Council and furnished for £100 each.

A contrasting trend is the emphasis on display of craft products. The British Institute of Industrial Art established a loan collection of hand block print textiles (Barron and Larcher, Frances Woolard and others) in 1926 as part of a series of new travelling

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319 GD 326/59 Llewellyn Smith, Sir Hubert The Place of Economy in Art, Inaugural lecture at LCC Central School, 11/10/1929.
322 The CPA Chairman was advised to 'send some of its best productions, to include some of outstanding merit and special designs for the occasion, in which case the Selection Committee would guarantee that they should be exhibited.' M75/Directors' Minute Book No. 16, 14/11/33.
323 Pevsner, N. op. cit., p161.
324 GD 325/60/35, Journal of the Design and Industries Association
exhibitions. A strong craft emphasis was also evident in the British displays in International Exhibitions, particularly the 1927 Leipzig Exhibition (described as ‘a display more appropriate to the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society’ by Julian Holder). In spring 1930 there was a hand-block print exhibition at Bath. There were also annual exhibitions by arts and crafts institutions such as the Red Rose Guild of craftworkers in Manchester and the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society.

6.6.4 Media

Women's magazines, art journals, industry and in-house journals and newspaper reviews all form a picture of the state and significance of current styles. Printed dress fabrics could be seen in the couture fashions of Vogue (which could be borrowed from public libraries) and the new weeklies aimed at the lower middle class such as Woman's Own (est. 1932) and Woman (est. 1937). Free dressmaking patterns were offered by the more downmarket Mab’s Fashions, Woman’s Companion, Woman and Home (1926) and Harmsworth Fashions. The Co-operative Women’s Guilds and individual co-operators were supplied with fashion news and dressmaking and knitting patterns by Woman’s Outlook from 1919. Furnishing fabrics were illustrated in the monthlies, with their emphasis on domesticity and home management for the middle class woman without servants: Good Housekeeping (est. 1922), Woman’s Journal, My Home and Modern Home (est. 1928).

Magazines and journals were independent market agents that influenced consumers, which acted to increase the desirability of specific designs and styles and raise the cultural status of individual designers and designers in general. These approved model objects were also publicised in art media sites of high cultural value, such as The Studio magazine, or were allowed as mise-en-scène in the illustrations of Modernist architectural journals. Modernism appeared in the more expensive women's magazines in 1930 as both a separate

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325 Studio, August 1926, p120.
327 GD 325/ 60/ 28 DIA Journal, April 1930.
330 The ideological presentation of domesticity and the role of housewife and mother in women’s magazines of the interwar period is discussed in Beddoe, D. Back to Home and Duty: Women Between the Wars, 1918-1939, Pandora, 1989, pp14-22.
category of pattern style (among 'futuristic' or traditional options, in Woman's Journal) and an exciting movement in architecture and design. For instance, Good Housekeeping featured 'International Style' houses by prominent Modernists from the Continent, Scandinavia, and Britain. The coherence of this operation of established authority in promoting a small canon of Modernist textile design is seen in the prominence of craft produced block prints: most textiles illustrated in The Studio from 1926 - 1931 were craft block prints. This was accepted as a signifier of high cultural value due to its production by artists (or designers trained in art school) and sale in specialist craft galleries and boutiques. A standard format for illustrations in the Studio Yearbook was of interiors: for example, in 1926 an Oxfordshire sitting room decorated by Vladimir Polunin and a Polish interior with batik hangings by Ateliers de Cracovie was shown and in 1928 a Parisian interior by Pierre Chareau. Miscellaneous designs illustrated include textile prints by Felice Rix of the Wiener Werkstatte and a rug by Loes Resch from Schwertberg, Upper Austria in 1928, while in 1931 there were six textiles by the Wiener Werkstatte, two by Barron and Larcher, three by Enid Marx, one by Foxton Ltd., (all hand block printed) and a curtain designed by Eric Bagge. This publication was a primary method for international design sources (primarily Continental European) to reach British designers and others in the textile industry, contributing strongly to the contemporary construction of European avant-garde design.

Trade journals, such as The Drapers' Record and The Draper's Organiser for dress fabrics and The Cabinet Maker and Complete Home Furnisher for furnishing textiles, could be significant in forming and transferring constructions of what is considered fashionable. The Cabinet Maker and Complete Home Furnisher discussed possible trends (see analysis of Egyptian and Persian styles in Section 6.7.2) and reported on consumer buying patterns (Sections 6.3.4 and 6.7.3). There were also regular reports on the exhibits of firms, though very limited description of designs is usually given. For example, in a review of the 15th annual Drapery, Textile and Women's Wear Exhibition in the Royal Agricultural Hall in 1923, the stand of Franklin & Franklin is described as comprising 'a big range of cretonnes, fadeless velours (curtains) and fadeless casement damasks. Cushions for hide suites are prominent and a new fabric which gives an excellent imitation of sealskin may

331 The Studio Year Book of Decorative Art, 1926, p59; 1928, p103, 187.
332 Ibid., 1928, p187; 1931.
be seen.' However, 'at the stand of Robert Owtram & Co. Ltd. . . may be seen Caselda casements in a variety of designs for correct use for the modern villa.' Illustrations of possible models of coming fashions, examples of suitable subjects for inspiration (including museum samples) and pictorial information on tastes in other centres (such as France and the USA) were provided. Occasional articles on manufacturing methods, companies or designers were also illustrated: in an article on the history and current use of copper roller printing, four illustrations of Turnbull & Stockdale prints were shown, two Modernist (including Figure 6.148 and a Futurist/Modernist design by Frank Ormrod similar to Figure 6.147) and two conventional floral designs. The Drapers' Record illustrated current British dress fabrics, rather than design sources. These examples were usually given without interpretation, to enliven pages of trade news (e.g. three Ferguson Bros. fabrics of scattered flower designs and a large scale leaf and flower design by the CPA, surrounded by articles on prison sentences for shoplifters, linen yarn prices and sales clearance, in January 1931).

Radio discussions could also be influential: in 1932 there was an estimated 24 million listeners. A series of Talks on design issues was broadcast by the BBC from 1930, with pamphlets and articles in The Listener associated with the talks. These included the Changing World series by J.E. Barton (DIA in tone, discussing questions such as Is beauty a luxury? and What is taste?), Design in Industry and the Design in Modern Life series (chaired by John Gloag, all in 1933, to coincide with the Dorland Hall exhibition. In 1937, Anthony Bertram, Geoffrey Boumphrey and Edward Halliday) presented Design in Everyday Things, a series of 12 talks, focused on discussion of housing issues. These talks took a strongly Modernist approach to design, provoking a public debate in the letters of The Listener. In 1934, Mr Kaines Smith, the Director of Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery, led a round table discussion on art and the manufacturer on the Midland Home Service. This was linked to a 'Midland Industrial Art Exhibition' at Birmingham Art

334 Ibid.
335 'Printing Cretonnes by Copper Roller', The Cabinet Maker and Complete Home Furnisher, 14/3/31.
336 The Drapers' Record, 3/1/31.
338 Ibid., pp132-7.
Gallery (of manufactures in the counties within 50 miles of Birmingham), which was curated in collaboration with the DIA.

As a highly popular leisure activity and form of popular culture, the cinema had a distinct effect on fashion in the inter-war period. In the 1920s, it was considered a working class, populist form of entertainment (many people went three or four times a week), but it became increasingly accepted during the 1930s by the middle class: by 1939, there were 990 million annual admissions. Feature films with exotic locations and romanticised historical settings could lead to a rise in fashionability of foreign influence textile designs. For example, *The Thief of Bagdad* in 1925 may have had an influence on the trend for Persian subjects in 1926, produced by Sidney Mawson and others for furnishing fabrics. Roman Neoclassical motifs could have been influenced by the popularity of *Ben Hur* and *Quo Vadis* in 1925. A major film of 1917 was *Cleopatra*, starring Theda Bara (not shown in Leicester until April 1919): such films could be an influence for several years. Popular interest in Egyptian style would have been stimulated and more easily roused to a fashion, in 1923 when the tomb of Tutankhamun was opened and artefacts exhibited. An emphasis on the exotic was also given in the interior decoration of cinemas: in March 1919 the Floral Hall, a cinema in Belgrave Gate in Leicester, was redecorated in Japanese style from prints. Fashion in dress was directly influenced by films, with dress patterns of clothing worn by film stars and discussions on how to emulate their style given in women's magazines, particularly specialist magazines such as *Film Fashionland* and *Women's Filmfare*.

Orchestral accompaniment – before its erosion with the introduction of the ‘talkies’ from 1928 onwards – frequently used jazz themes and would have disseminated it from its more restricted orbit of stylish and expensive night-clubs. The type of subject matter and genres popular also encouraged this emphasis, with ‘daring’ comedies and romantic dramas shown, such as *Cocaine*, a story of London night-life, which when shown at

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342 Discussion of the influence of Hollywood style on fashion is given in Taylor, L. & Wilson, E. op. cit., pp98-101; Reports on movie stars' clothing in *Woman's Outlook* and the use of such movie stars by cooperative manufacturers to sell clothes in noted in Redmile, B. op. cit., p33.
343 Williams, D. op. cit., p153.
Leicester's Scala cinema in May 1922 was accompanied by a jazz band. The first sound film to be widely shown was the *Singing Fool*, of the jazz singer Al Johnson, in 1929. The 'jazz patterns' in printed textiles and wallpaper may have become more popular due to association with this music and the related ideal of a glamorous metropolitan lifestyle.

6.6.5 Retail

6.6.5.1 Influence on Taste by Retailers

Consumer choice is perhaps most influenced by the availability and presentation of products shown in their local drapers or furnishers. The impact of different types of retail outlet, and their relative significance on design, is discussed in Section 6.6.5. An ethical approach of public service, as well as the understanding of quality in design, was expected of distributors in the DIA. They were expected to aim for:

'More knowledge and sympathy to direct a wiser distribution and therefore a wiser production. Recognition of an art of shopkeeping; of shopkeeping as a great public service and therefore a public responsibility; of shopkeeping as 'good fun' and not a mere business proposition, which will help rather than hinder business.'

Decisions made by department store or chain store buyers have a paramount impact on the eventual sales success of new designs. Their reactions may depend on whether the designs to be assessed fit into clear style categories that have previously sold well. It will also depend on a series of preconceptions about the tastes of the dominant market of the retailer. Education of those in the distribution structure, to improve demand for good design, was a key policy of the DIA. A response to this was the establishment of a two-year course at the LCC School of Art for the training of textile salesmen and women. The trend towards direct distribution links (Section 2.5) would tend to increase the power of the retail buyer, but might also mean that the manufacturer was more responsive to the consumer and innovations could be tested more easily, due to a shorter distribution chain of individual preconceptions. The centrality of the buyer's opinion in the formation of public taste and the difficulty of access to the market of new styles was underlined by Minnie McLeish in 1919:

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344 Ibid., p142.
'For far from a mysterious and unaccountable public being the obstacle, too often the personal prejudice of the Buyer came to intervene and represent, or pass for, public taste.'

A contradictory view of the tastes of the retail buyer was given in the *Design and the Cotton Industry* report. It commented that:

'It is observed that the buyer of designs for the print works tends to be more conservative than the departmental buyer of the distributing house to which the printed goods are to be supplied. If the two men visit the [Parisian studio] atelier together, the retail buyer will frequently accept designs which the other has rejected as unlikely to sell.'

The approach taken by the sales staff of the manufacturing companies will have had an effect on the responses of retail buyers – training and preparation of the sales team for new design styles and fabric ranges would be a key stage of the process of taste construction. Retail and wholesale buyers were sometimes consulted directly by manufacturing companies on the style of designs likely to sell, with their response to new design ranges reported back to the producer and sometimes the Board of Directors. Managers or directors of production companies would occasionally visit markets to test the acceptability of new product lines and investigate broader changes in market demand (see UTR analysis in Section 6.4 and MSF marketing policy analysis in Section 5.4.5.2)

The effect of the retailer's choice in presenting particular goods as a fashion is indicated by the statements to be found in catalogues and other sales literature. For example, the 1920 Harrods catalogue announced:

'We have abolished Victorian wallpapers, cretonnes and window curtains and taken to light backgrounds and gay colours so far as carpets, cushions and hangings are concerned.'

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348 *Design and the Cotton Industry*, op. cit., pp11-12.
6.6.5.2 Department Stores

The department store established and promoted a brand identity, with which a particular quality, style and ethos were associated. This approach is demonstrated by Fenwick, Ltd., which claimed to be originating fashions as well as distributing them, referring to the constant notice taken by Vogue magazine of their newest fashions. They co-operated closely with wholesale suppliers and ‘provide manufacturers with the ideas for many of our most successful numbers.’ The distinctive brand identity of department stores became threatened in the interwar period, with the rise of branded goods at fixed prices. A strategy department stores used to define this identity was to offer interior design/decoration services and display of interior sets. Interior designers, such as Hayes Marshall and Ronald Fleming at Fortnum & Mason’s, were employed by the stores to advise customers, arrange room sets and organise exhibitions. Department stores often acted as self-conscious exemplars of quality design, whether in formal exhibitions or smaller displays such as a display of Eileen Hunter fabrics at Muir Simpsons (Glasgow) in April 1938 and Henry Barkers (Nottingham) in the mid 1930s. Heals opened its Mansard Gallery in 1917, showing a mixture of avant-garde art and design exhibitions. Waring & Gillow staged an exhibition of design in 1928, selected and designed by Serge Chermayeff, which displayed the designs of M. Follot, from the Art Deco exhibition, with examples of the more avant-garde English products. Other examples include the exhibition of ‘Functional Furnishing’ in 1930 by P. & E. Gane Ltd., of Bristol, of ‘typical modern furniture for a middle class house’, including a ‘sunroom with painted furniture and gay textiles.’ An ‘Exhibition of Contemporary Decoration’ was staged at Fortnum & Mason’s in October 1932, less Modernist in approach and combining chrome furniture with the ‘cosy sort.’ In 1936 there were ‘Stores Exhibitions’ by the DIA at Bowman’s in London, Kendal, Milne & Co. in Manchester, Dunn’s at Bromley and Rowntree’s at

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350 ‘The Modern Woman is Style Snobbish, but not Price Snobbish: How Fenwick, of New Bond Street, Cater for Middle Class Women Looking for Tasteful Clothes at Moderate Prices’, The Draper's Record, 8/31, p25.
351 Ibid.
355 GD 325/60/30 DIA Journal, October 1930.
Scarborough and an exhibition of Modernist rooms at Heal & Son. A number of retail directors were actively involved in the DIA, while company members of the association included retailers and distributors. Individual textile buyers, printed fabric salesmen, and house furnishers were also members. The Retail Distributors' Association was a focus of new ‘scientific management’ ideas for department stores, including greater co-ordination between manufacturers and retailers and improvement in design quality (which would reduce the number of similar, but inadequate, products held). There was a further association of retailers - the Good Furniture Group - consisting of retail members of the DIA who were actively involved in promoting Modernist design. It was established in 1938 by Gordon Russell, Geoffrey Dunn and Crofton Gane and collectively commissioned the design and production of furniture.

The active involvement in design and the formation of taste went further than the promotion of interior styles to the consumer, since many department stores took on a direct commissioning role (Sections 2.4-5). The significance of the department store role in developing new styles in France, during the interwar period, by unifying innovative design, production, promotion and commerce, is discussed by Nancy Troy. Some department stores employed studio designers (Waring & Gillow), others bought from freelance designers (Marshall Field & Co. and Liberty & Co. visited the Silver Studio to

357 Pevsner, N. op. cit, p161.
358 1936 'Contemporary Furniture by Seven Architects' exhibition (designed by Maxwell Fry, Jack Howe, Raymond McGrath, Marcel Breuer, Christopher Nicholson, Christopher Heal and Brian O'Rorke). Goodden, S. At the Sign of the Fourposter: A History of Heals, Heal & Son, 1984, p85.
359 GD 326/ 60 DIA Journals and lists of members. Ambrose Heal (Heal & Son Ltd.), John Marshall (Marshall & Snelgrove), Crofton Gane (P.E. Gane Ltd.), Gordon Selfridge (Selfridge & Co. Ltd.) and Sir Andrew H. Pettigrew (Pettigrew & Stevens Ltd.) were individual members.
360 Ibid. Harrods Stores Ltd., Heal & Son Ltd. (both London), John A. Boardman (Stratford), P.E. Gane Ltd. (Bristol) and Wylie & Lockhead of Glasgow.
361 Ibid. Debenham & Freebody, Selfridge & Co. Ltd., Marshall & Snelgrove, Derry & Thom and John Hinds M.P. (of London), Finnigans Ltd. (Manchester) and Pettigrew & Stevens Ltd. (Glasgow).
362 Ibid. Textile buyers included Bertram Pace (Southport), L. Conrad Hartley (Manchester), W.S. Wallis (Edinburgh), Miss J Gray, Charles D. Young and Charles T.M. Sellar (Glasgow).
363 Ibid. Henry M. Hayward (Stockport).
365 Lancaster. B. op. cit., p118. The ideas were discussed in Neal, L.E. Retailing and the Public, George Allen & Unwin, 1932. The author was a leading member of the RDA and managing director of Daniel Neal & Sons Ltd..
366 MacCarthy, F. All Things Bright and Beautiful: Design in Britain 1830 to Today, George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1972, p110.
order designs or engaged the designs of printed textile companies (Turnbull & Stockdale Ltd. furnishing print designs were engaged by Heal, Liberty and Macy's). The main retailer recurring in case study analysis is Liberty & Co. Ltd., which, although characterised as conservative in the approach to design by management in the period by Alison Adburgham, appears to have produced moderately Modernist floral designs in general (Section 6.4.2.7.2.2). Heal & Son Ltd. engaged three Modernist prints from Turnbull & Stockdale Ltd., designed by Christopher Heal (Figures 6.200 and 6.315). Debenham's provincial stores sold furnishing fabric under an own brand 'Vereston' label, John Barker's used the 'Kenbar' label and Lewis's of Liverpool used 'Standex' and 'Wilwer' brands. Craft products were also commissioned and sold by some department stores: Joyce Beal (the eldest daughter of Mr Benjamin Beal) produced batik textiles that were sold in Beal's and Bobby's Shops, and Geraldine Fisher was commissioned to produce painted woodwork for Beal's Shops.

6.6.5.3 Chain Stores

Marks & Spencer Ltd. was an increasingly dominant chain store in the clothing sector in this period, in scale and breadth of coverage. The main emphasis in their approach to products appears to have been quality, standardisation and affordable price, rather than a particular concept of design in relation to printed textiles. Illustrations in Goronwy Rees' company history appear to show only plain fabrics in the 1930s (in a buying department, garment supplier's factory and window display), though photographic clarity is not good. A statement of the company approach is given in 1927, in the Chairman's speech to shareholders, following flotation as a public company in 1926: 'We believe we are

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368 1923-5 diary, Silver Studio Collection, op. cit.
370 'My third visit this year [1926] was to my cousins, the Beals of Bournemouth... Mr Benjamin Beal owned all the multi-store shops of that name along the larger South Coast towns. They were luxury shops where you went for fashions and elegance, and where they served meals of quality in gracious style. Mr Beal's twin brother owned all the Bobby's Shops, they went in for furniture, carpets and furnishing fabrics. Joyce was a very creative person, and she had a large attic studio beautifully fitted up in their charming house overlooking a public heather garden. There she made all kinds of things in batik work - scarves, headcloths, handkerchiefs and printed tablecloths, etc. These were sold in their shops. I had a wonderful time heating up the wax for painting on the design, then cracking it and dyeing the material, then ironing it, waxing it and dyeing it again. She let me do some on my own. While I was there I got an order from Beals Shop to supply as much painted woodwork that I had time to do. I painted sets of table-rings for grown-ups and children, some to match children's china. I also painted dressing table sets, candlesticks, trinket boxes, etc. I loved doing this, so was kept busy in my spare time for the next few years.' Journal of Geraldine Baines (unpublished), Part 2, Career Years: England, 1926-35, p4.
371 Rees, op. cit., illus. 21-23.

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filling a long-felt want in providing sound quality goods at inexpensive prices, which the public cannot get elsewhere at those prices.\textsuperscript{372} A Design Department was established in 1936, 'intended to keep the company abreast of the latest trends in fashion and design', for which 'close contacts with fashion houses on the Continent were built up.'\textsuperscript{373} The emphasis is on quality of cloth and fashionability of dress, rather than print design. Indications of the broad style aims are given by the vice-chair's address at the 1931 AGM 'We see no reason why an article, because it is low-priced, should not have most of the refinements and neatness of a higher-priced article.'\textsuperscript{374} This is supported by a caption to an illustration in the Marks & Spencer Magazine during the 1930s, which states: 'This neat and attractively dressed girl bought her clothes at a Marks & Spencer Store.'\textsuperscript{375} Janice Winship analyses the chain-store style produced for lower middle class women in the interwar years as 'nice and neat', a code of self-discipline and 'making small' inscribed on the body, that expresses cultural goodwill towards the bourgeoisie and distinction from the working class.\textsuperscript{376} The anonymity and standardisation required, within an acceptably fashionable cut of dress, imply plain fabrics and small-scale, undramatic prints are likely retailer requirements. This is contradicted by the Ferguson Bros. Ltd. designs in the 1937-50 trial book noted as Marks & Spencer: they are floral designs, mainly of fairly large flowers in vibrant pink, blue and yellow colours (Figures 6.288-291).

6.6.5.4 Co-operative Societies

The Co-operative Wholesale Society adopted a Modernist approach, signalled by the funding of a visit by CWS architects in 1930 to study Modernist architecture in Holland and Germany.\textsuperscript{377} The architects' departments undertook the design of furniture and floorcoverings, in addition to buildings. However, the general standard of design of CWS products (though not the architecture) was considered low by Pevsner, with no advantage in appearance over the goods of their competitors.\textsuperscript{378} He was told that this was because of the low artistic standards of their consumers (who had annual incomes of £150-250) and

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{372} Rees, G. St Michael: a History of Marks & Spencer, Weidenfeld & Nicholson, p105.
  \item \textsuperscript{373} Ibid., p152.
  \item \textsuperscript{374} Ibid., p106.
  \item \textsuperscript{375} Winship, J. ‘New disciplines for women and the rise of the chain store in the 1930s’, in Andrews, M. and Talbot, M., All the World and Her Husband: Women in Twentieth Century Consumer Culture, Cassell, 2000, p30. 
  \item \textsuperscript{376} Ibid., p30-32.
  \item \textsuperscript{377} Redfern, P. The New History of the C.W.S., J.M. Dent & Sons, 1938, p423.
  \item \textsuperscript{378} Pevsner, N. op. cit., p184.
\end{itemize}
the lower degree of commercial risk taking that the CWS could undertake, due to their responsibility to thousands of shareholders. There were 12 clothing factories owned by the CWS in the interwar period, producing own-brand Belmont dress, overall and lingerie ranges and Air-o-Mac rainproof coats.  

379 Fabrics, haberdashery and dressmaking patterns were sold in local co-operative stores, with fashionable emphasis particularly on the cut of clothing (indicated in fashion updates and advertising in Woman's Outlook). However, in drapery and women's wear, the societies often ‘tended to lag behind in styling and fashion’ other types of retailers, concentrating on staple lines and avoiding fancy goods that would encourage frivolous expenditure.  

380 The expansion of co-operative retailing, particularly the establishment of large city centre stores, increased the significance of the CWS as a bulk purchaser of cheaper textile goods, and therefore the effect of their approach to taste. For example, in February 1927 the UTR minutes note that in ‘C’ Department ‘the Co-operative Wholesale Society is at present buying more than the regular wholesalers.’  

6.6.5.5 Small Boutiques and Craft Galleries

Small dressmaking shops were often able to have a more fashionable emphasis in design or innovative approach, than those retailers relying on factory mass-production.  

382 A number of avant-garde small shops and galleries were opened in the 1930s, mainly in London.  

383 The craft emphasis of these shops and galleries brought artist-made hand-block print fabrics of Modernist design to the position of highest symbolic value in the creation of taste. This resulted in commissions for craft workshops for the decoration of liners, town halls, hotels and university colleges.

6.6.6 Consumer Influence

The importance of consumer preference in defining fashion (catered for by the provision of large ranges to facilitate personal choice) was underlined in one Ferguson Bros.

381 UGD 13/ S/ 6, Directors' and Heads of Departments' Minute Book, 9/2/27. References to the CWS purchasing chintz from the UTR ‘C’ Department occur in 8/12/26 and 10/4/29.
382 Jefferys, J. op. cit., p333.
advertisement to retailers in May 1928:

‘When a customer comes into your shop with her mind made up about small flowers or little geometric patterns or large leaf designs, are you able to satisfy her, or must your saleswoman undertake the ungrateful task of selling her something she does not want?’

Streaming of options or 'lines', with graduations of stylistic extremity, providing versions of the latest style and slightly adapted traditional options, was a practice adopted by many companies in order to cover the tastes of the mass market. It occurred in the early 1930s for dress fabrics, as more conventional designs were produced cotermiously with ‘bold futurist designs’ and in the mid 1930s for furnishing prints, when Modernist styles had become established but traditional designs were reviving in popularity. This allowed for regional or individual variations in design choice within broad style trends and give greater power to consumers to direct style change.

A common practice was the close observation of consumer buying patterns, leading to further ordering by the retailers of those apparently favoured trends. For example, buyers reported these consumer trends to the furnishing trade in 1935:

‘With regard to patterns, chevrons are definitely established and show promise of selling well. Herringbone patterns are sought after to some extent, as are horizontal stripes. There is no call for vertical stripes or spots, however. Leaf designs in many variations are becoming more and more popular. This is probable due to a reaction from the mechanical designs of recent seasons. Modern but not geometric treatments of leaf patterns are in particular demand. There are still some floral designs sold, but these are not as popular as the more abstract leaf motives.’

Sometimes the process of influence within the distribution/ retail structure was avoided by consumers, who sent direct to the manufacturer for pattern books, to gain access to the more unusual or avant-garde products. It was a common practice in rural communities, and was a strategy often used by interior designers and decorators, to supplement the retail

383 Examples are: Modern Textiles (1926-39), The Three Shields Gallery (est. 1922), Little Gallery (est. 1928), New Handworks Gallery (est. c. 1928) and Dunbar Hay Ltd. (est. 1936).
386 Alison-Anne Whiting oral history interview, December 1995: her mother's practice, living in Dumfriesshire.
choice available. Some interior designers and architects also designed and commissioned their own ranges. These alternative routes into consumption of furnishing pattern, combined with the variety of types of retail outlets, mean that communication of style change is not inhibited by the preconceptions of one stage of the retail process.

6.6.7 Conclusion: Sources of Influence on Design

Some sources of influence were acquired for the use of a design studio, while others were public sources such as exhibitions or animated films that stimulated an interest in trade and public in a style. Exhibitions and the media (particularly The Studio journal which was bought by designers and those interested in art) had an effect in constructing the model of what was considered avant-garde in printed textile design. Retailers took an active role in the construction of taste, in their commissioning of print production, purchase choices and display, when a concept of what was fashionable would be presented for consumption. The trade conception of contemporary fashion would be conveyed by publications such as The Drapers’ Record, The Draper’s Organiser and The Cabinet Maker and Complete Home Furnisher, by company advertisements and by the interactions of company sales staff and retail or wholesale buyers. The public is likely to have been influenced by the media, whether women’s magazines, art journals, books on home decoration and design, radio or exhibitions. Much of this material was propagandist in promoting a particular type of design, either Modernist or a negotiation between Modernism and other design styles. However, the resistance to such pressure and volatility of consumers is indicated by the trend towards conventional floral and historical design in the later 1930s when Modernist propaganda was well established, the popularity of abstract furnishing textiles in 1932-4 and the enthusiasm for ‘Jazz’ Modernism in the post-war period. The public appear to have treated Modernism as a fashion, rather than a stable definition of ‘good design’ as the Modernist propagandists intended.
6.7 Trends and Fashion

Common styles and motifs will be considered, to find whether there was a broadly accepted semiotic vocabulary. Were particular signifiers or syntagms identified with ideological positions? Does the social context or the stylistic coding of the signifier modify the meaning? The interpretation of visual signs can be subjective, with differing views held by the designer, manufacturer, retailers and consumers. Associations also develop during the ownership of the product, in a creative consumption process of appropriation and transformation.387

6.7.1 Historical Styles

The eclectic use of a variety of historical styles was an accepted practice in 1920s interior decoration, with different period styles used semiotically - chosen for the mood or meaning associated with it as the appropriate setting for particular rooms or activities. John Gloag (in 1922) dismissed the pre-war aim of accurate period reproduction as uncreative:

'The correct and academic treatments that upheld the tradition of the good work that had made such progress in the days of Edward VII, lack the vitality of the decoration that claims personality. The drawback of the Edwardian tradition in interior work was that it often produced results that lacked even remote traces of imaginative effort.'388

Similar statements, such as 'We can suggest a period, without trying to make a picture of faultless accuracy', are frequently repeated. Textiles are considered in this light - 'The selection of materials for curtains must be guided by the period or particular atmosphere a room is going to suggest'.390

The use of a 'Jacobean' style often allowed an abstraction and liveliness to the design rarely present in the floral studies common to furnishing print design. An indication of the prevalence of this strategy is the proportion of designs printed by Stead McAlpin that can be categorised as both Modernist and historical (43/143, or 30% of the Jacobean designs),

389 Ibid., p32.
390 Ibid., p102.
an example of which is Figure 6.293. This convergence of Modernist and historical styles in a proportion of designs is confirmed by Minnie McLeish, who commented in 1919 that

‘Forms sketched from old patterns would be called, probably, by the trade, “Jacobean.” Could anything be more “futuristic”?’ 391

She also gave examples of a number of such loosely sketched patterns (Figure 6.292). This is in spite of an opposition to reproduction style designs, shown by scornful references to spurious ‘dull imitations to order’ and the remark that ‘this business of living on the dead by sterile imitation is nothing but a process of atrophy and degeneration.’ 392 Conventional Jacobean floral designs became more frequent from 1929 and were common in the later 1930s (Figure 6.179).

Regency style or Vogue Regency (defined by Alan Powers as ‘more an inflection of Modernism than a period style’ 393) was increasingly fashionable in the 1930s. Regency reproduction was displayed at the 1934 Ideal Home Exhibition in the ‘1834 Room’ by Ronald Fleming. Examples are the temple design of the wallhanging at the 1934 Dorland Hall exhibition of ‘Contemporary Industrial Design in the Home’ and the Greek Neoclassical signifiers used by Marion Dorn (e.g. Cyprus, a 1936 jacquard woven design with Ionic columns, ivy and flying birds for Donald Brothers). By 1937, the style had become popular: ‘Regency carpets and Regency wallpapers and especially Regency swags and drapes, are now very much in fashion.’ 394 Signifiers of Regency Neoclassicism, such as stripes, scrolls, floral baskets and urns, occur frequently in the Stead McAlpin designs from 1936 (Figures 6.295-6). However, the style of conventional and historical floral designs than dominated production from 1935-40 was also used in Regency interior schemes and was often combined with Neoclassical signifiers in advertisements during the late 1930s (Figure 6.294).

392 Ibid.
6.7.2 Styles Influenced by Other Countries

Chinoiserie was a traditional type of textile and wallpaper design, established since the late 17th/early 18th C. (when Chinese wallpaper and silks were imported to Britain). Conventional Chinoiserie motifs included pagodas, islands, bridges, magnolia bushes and small groups of Chinese figures. It was used for the more expensive furnishing fabrics and wallpapers of the 1920s. Morton Sundour Fabrics and Sandersons frequently used this style, buying the designs from freelance designers who developed it as a speciality (Sidney Mawson, Haward Studio and Silver Studio designers such as Madeleine Lawrence, R.J. Houghton and Herbert Crofts). Examples of these high quality designs are the 1921 advertisement (Figure 6.122) and 1925 A. Morton block print (Figure 6.279). A fashionable form of the style was large-scale Chinese bird and foliage pictorial designs, illustrated in John Gloag's 1922 *Simple Schemes for Decoration*. An example is the Dean's House reception room in Durham, decorated in this style in the early 1920s. This type of design was produced by the Silver Studio and purchased by Story & Co. Ltd. and Stonards Ltd. Chinoiserie designs also occur among the conventional styles in the CPA Birch Vale silk prints (Figure 6.299), with a few very small-scale designs also produced by Ferguson Bros. Ltd. in printed cotton (Figure 6.298). A Chinese influence also appears in the CPA sample book of 1923, but either as a Modernist interpretation of the traditional syntagm of islands and pagodas (Figure 6.297), or as a calligraphic abstract style, occasionally combined with bamboo stalks.

Japonism was a stylistic influence fashionable in the 1870s-90s Aesthetic Movement and a continuing influence in New Art designs, building on an interest developed following the opening of trade with Japan in 1853. Examples of the style continued in the 1920s, as a variation of the large pictorial style of Chinoiserie design, also produced for more expensive furnishing fabrics and wallpapers. Common motifs were carp pools, waterlilies, paper lanterns, mimosa, pheasants and storks, often using silhouettes and asymmetry: grotesques, cloud patterns and geometrical patterns had been influential in the later 19th C.


Restored to/conserved in original condition in early 1990s. With thanks to the Dean of Durham Cathedral for access to wallpapers in visit of May 1999.

1923-5 diary, Silver Studio Collection, op. cit.
G.R. Kingbourne specialised in Japanese-based designs for the Silver Studio: the 1923-5 diary lists orders by Story & Co. of a Japanese design by Winifred Mold of a monkey swinging from a clump of trees and a Kingbourne design of water-lilies and fish by G.P. & J. Baker. There were 17 Japanese-style designs printed by Stead McAlpin from 1922-7 (predominantly of pheasants or landscape) and one in 1932, of a more geometrical pattern. MSF owned the blocks for two A. Morton prints - a 'Japanese Vase' by F.R. Gibson in December 1923 and 'Japanese Macaw, Vase and Stripes' by J.S. Rigby in July 1924; there was also a roller print 'Japanese Landscape' by J.S. Wheelwright in December 1928. A humorous Japanese landscape design was also produced by Felice Rix for the Wiener Werkstatte in 1923 (Figure 6.21).

Persian imagery had been used to signify the exotic 'other', often a composite Middle Eastern Orientalism inspired by The Arabian Nights, in a genre of fiction established in the 18th century. This has been analysed in the criticism of Said and later postcolonial discourse, including feminist discussion of women writers' use of 'Arabia' as a social and geographical mythical construction. Contributions to the debate within art and design history examine images using similar feminist postcolonial analysis. It became fashionable in the Art Nouveau style as a marker of erotic and exotic fantasy and continued in the Edwardian period with theatre and dance extravaganzas (such as the Ballet Russes Scheherazade performances in 1910-11 and Le Minaret in Paris, 1913) and Paul Poiret's couture designs (publicised with large scale society entertainments, such as 'The 1002nd Night' in June 1911). Romantic imagery of pre-Islamic Persia, Iran and Turkey also became identified with political freedom in the immediate pre-war period, due

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401 Mold order 21/7/24; Kingbourne order 16/2/25, 1923-5 diary, op. cit.
402 Antoine Galland translated The Arabian Nights in 1704; Walpole, Addison, Alexander Pope and many others produced Persian or Eastern tales in this popular genre.
to British colonial involvement with the rebellion against the Turkish Empire. Popular films such as *The Thief of Bagdad* (1924), starring Douglas Fairbanks, and Rudolph Valentino vehicles such as *The Sheik* (1921) and *The Son of the Sheik* (1926) encouraged the style. It was an accepted style in the more expensive furnishing fabrics and wallpapers of the pre-war and interwar period, with designers such as Sidney Mawson, J.S Wheelwright and the Silver Studio specialising in the style (for example, 39% of MSF foreign influence roller print designs from 1923-35 were Persian). There was a fashion for Persian style designs in 1931, inspired by an exhibition in January at the Royal Academy. An editorial in *The Cabinet Maker and Complete House Furnisher* pointed out the relevance of the exhibition as a source of inspiration for furnishing textiles. The evident public interest was followed up with a booklet produced by Warner & Sons Ltd. showing their Persian influenced textiles, a selection produced by Textile Francais Ltd. in their 'Charmstyle' range and examples in the BIF rayon exhibition at the Royal Albert Hall and White City BIF cotton exhibition.

The fractal 'Persian carpet' style appears in Ferguson Bros. and the CPA designs in 1923 (Figure 6.36). This may be coincidence or a general trend, but there are examples of some identical designs in both collections, so it could be that Ferguson supplied this style to the CPA. There is also an abstract style influenced by Persian rugs in Morton Sundour in the 1920s, which occurs also in Turnbull & Stockdale Ltd. This style is less random and closer to the woven geometry of Persian rugs, which were common accessories of interiors in wealthier homes (Figure 6.300). This style was continued in 1931, following the exhibition, and illustrated in their promotional booklet.

Indian-influenced floral designs often had a close resemblance to Jacobean style, often based on the traditional 'Tree of Life' pattern. The closeness in the styles is due to bi-

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410 'Rayon Fabrics and Fashions: Persian and Modernistic Designs at the Albert Hall', *The Drapers' Record*, 14/2/31

directional influence in the development of the Indian calico export industry in the 17th C., with European designers brought to the Indian workshops in the early 17th C., patterns sent for printing by the East India Company from 1662 and influence from the Indian calico designs shaping British printed textiles. Pictorial Indian style designs relate to the genre of the Orient in Persian and Turkish style designs, showing landscapes with figures in turbans, some on horses. There were 54 Indian designs printed by Stead McAlpin in the interwar period, of which four were pictorial designs (Figure 6.176) and the remainder floral (including six ‘Indian Stem’ designs).

A fashion for Egyptian designs occurred in the 1918-23 period. In 1918 four Egyptian designs were produced by MSF and printed at A. Morton & Co. Ltd. – two abstract (a zig-zag and a squares design), a sprig and stripe and one not described. They may relate to the small scale geometrical patterns for dress fabrics intended for the Egyptian market in the 1919 Potter’s Pattern Book of Styles (Figure 6.231). A popular source of the fashion was the 1917 Theda Bara film Cleopatra. The discovery of the Tutankamun artefacts and their display in 1923 led to a fashion for pictorial and hieroglyphic designs (Figure 6.301). The Cabinet Maker and Complete House Furnisher noted the possibility of a craze for Egyptian designs ‘following the tremendous interest accorded to the recent discoveries of the ancient Egyptian work by the Earl of Carnarvon’ in January 1923 and commented that Egyptian sources have been an inspiration for some modern French fabrics. In March the discussion of the trend continued, with praise for the stability of the culture and expression of its art (suggesting that the civilisation may have been far ahead of our own), while in April a Sanderson fabric copied from a mummy cloth from the Valley of the Kings and Foxton abstract designs appropriate to Egyptian interior schemes were spotlighted.

412 'Soft Furnishings: Persian Style in Fabrics', The Cabinet Maker and Complete House Furnisher, 14/2/31, p331: a ‘Kashan’ tapestry design is illustrated.
6.7.3 Motifs

Roses are strongly identified as a signifier of tradition, appearing in dress fabrics as a standard style type of pastel colours and conventional floral bunch or sprig motifs during the 1930s (Figures 6.267-8). In furnishing print designs, it occurred as a key element in a range of historical style types during the 1920s and as one of the few identifiable flower types in the floral designs of the late 1930s, although a Modernist interpretation of the motif was occasionally used (Figures 6.163, 195, 294). Common flowers to be depicted in a Modernist style in the Stead McAlpin furnishing prints were tulips, poppies, delphiniums, iris and hollyhocks (Figure 6.154), while harebells, tulips and poppies occur in Turnbull & Stockdale prints (Figure 6.149). Dahlias, daisies, poppies, tulips, carnations and honesty were used in dress fabric designs (Figures 6.57, 273), though often Modernist flowers were a simplified generic form. Leaf designs were also a frequent Modernist alternative to the floral and abstract dress designs of Ferguson Bros., particularly in art silk prints (Figure 6.71). They became a signifier of a Modernist approach in furnishing textiles during the mid 1930s (Figures 6.199-200, 209), produced by a wide variety of designers (Aufseeser, J.S. Rigby, Marion Dorn, Christopher Heal, John Chirnside). A. Pether, the buyer at Waring & Gillow, commented on the phenomenon in 1935:

'The quantity of leaf designs now noticeable is due to a desire to get away from the older types of floral pattern and at the same time avoid the harsh, unrestful modern styles.'

Tropical bird designs were an established genre that were very common in furnishing prints of the 1920s, allowing a wide range of Modernist and more traditional interpretations, as well as broadening out into smaller garden bird and purely invented bird motifs (Figures 6.129-131, 134, 137, 146, 159, 170). Hunting scenes occur in traditional and Modernist styles of furnishing prints during the period (Figure 6.317), but depictions of sporting or other leisure activities are rare. Dancing figures in folk costume or fancy dress were an infrequently occurring standard type in dress fabrics of 1936-7. The nautical/seaside theme is common in cheaper dress prints of the later 1930s, produced by the CPA, Tootals and Fergusons, with motifs of small sailing boats, anchors and rope especially popular (Figure 6.60). Dancing sailors, seagulls and sailing ships were added to the rope, shell and anchor motifs for more expensive dress and for furnishing fabrics (Figures 6.45,

115, 315). This perhaps implies that the seaside holiday was seen as epitomising summer for the wider British market, while cruising became fashionable for wealthier — but the emphasis on ships and sailors in the later 1930s could also indicate a growing nationalistic awareness of the importance of naval power to Britain. Alison Settle (the editor of Vogue) stated in her 1934 RSA lecture on Dress Fabrics that 'textile manufacturers must bear in mind the cruising influence with its strong seaside motifs of starfish and anchors, shells and coral.' The 1920s seaside designs are more domestic, emphasising children's play (Figure 6.304).

6.7.4 Nursery Print Styles

Production of nursery wallpaper, ceramics and other products (in which the aim was to interest and entertain, rather than instruct and admonish) had become a fashionable genre from the 1870s, with designs by Walter Crane and other prominent illustrators. Design of the nursery was given serious attention in the 1920s, as an environment conducive to the good educational and psychological development of the child, building on the interest taken at the turn of the century. The popularisation of Freudian psychology contributed to concern over the child development, encouraging a more libertarian, less repressive approach in avant-garde circles. In 1922, John Gloag categorised the nursery (with the bathroom and kitchen) as a non-period room. He advocated a lively, child-centred approach, with designs to encourage the imagination and support games of make-believe, in contrast to the overtly instructional approach previously common. Illustrations to the classics of children's literature were suggested for frieze decoration. A similar approach is evident in an editorial of The Cabinet Maker and Complete House Furnisher in February 1923, which advised a practical approach with 'little touches of informative interest' but no instructional tone. In decoration, the aim should be to promote games of make-

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418 Prominent examples of nursery design in the period include the 1901 ‘House for an Art-Lover’ competition entries by Margaret MacDonald Mackintosh and C.R. Mackintosh, Baillie Scott and others; an Omega Workshops design in 1913, discussed in White, C. The World of the Nursery, Herbert Press, 1984.
419 Freud's The Interpretation of Dreams was published in English in 1915: by 1922 comment in newspapers and other sources demonstrated the general knowledge of such concepts (e.g. 'We are all psycho-analysts now and know that apparently innocent dreams are the infallible signs of the most horrible neuroses' quote from Daily News given in Graves, R. & Hodge, A. The Long Weekend: A Social History of Great Britain, 1918-1939, Four Square, 1940, p99).
421 'Nursery Furnishings', The Cabinet Maker and Complete House Furnisher, 3/2/23.
believe and imagination, though 'the grotesque exaggerations of men and animals' which appeal to 'a certain type of parent' should be avoided. A similar editorial article, in February 1931, warned against the highly sophisticated and 'arty' decorations often used, such as Modernist renderings of Noah's Ark or Alice in Wonderland, which are pleasing to adults.422 Mrs Sam Sloan, in an article in March 1931, commended the charming curtain fabrics now in vogue for nurseries and commented that the modern tendency was to expend much more care and thought on the decoration of nurseries than formerly, with individually designed and painted friezes becoming popular.423

Some nursery textile prints for the were influenced by popular children's fiction or cinema animation, but these often required licence fees to be paid to the film company or illustrator, which might be a far heavier investment than was economic for individual designs. The CPA arranged licensing agreements for 'Jerry the Troublesome Tyke' in 19926 with Messrs. Pathé, while the 'Felix' designs were printed on concession in 1924 and later supplied by Davis Feather Mills Ltd. in 1926 (to be made into cushions).424 It also found itself in a difficult legal position when it bought some freelance designs based on Beatrix Potter characters.425 The legal dispute indicated that imitation of Mabel Lucie Attwell's illustration style as well as that of Beatrix Potter was practised by a freelance designer ('Attwell's Kids' and 'Pip, Squeak and Wilfred' designs were considered likely also to be infringing). Direct influence from popular children's fiction is also demonstrated by the Tenniel-style 'Alice in Wonderland' designs occur in Ferguson Bros. cotton prints (Figure 6.307) and Morton Sundour Fabrics (the latter designed by Voysey). Several designs were produced by J.S. Wheelwright based on comic strips and sold as bedspreads by newspapers, including 'The Noahs and Japhet', 'Pipsqueak and Wilfred', 'Teddy Tail' and 'Billy Bimbo.'426 Easily identifiable Disney characters were also used in furnishing fabrics by the later 1930s, such as Mickey Mouse on a trapeze printed on towelling fabric in 1935 for H. Tong by Turnbull & Stockdale Ltd. (Figure 6.303). Three large quilt designs from Walt Disney (Snow White, the Sandman and Silly Symphony),

422 'Furnishing the Nursery', The Cabinet Maker and Complete House Furnisher, 7/2/31, pp281-2.
423 Sloan, Mrs S. 'Personality in Nursery Decoration', Ideal Home, March 1931.
425 M75/ 1919-28/ 93.1 A 'Jemima Puddle-duck' and a 'Peter Rabbit' design were the subject of legal action, resulting in a £3000 fine in settlement by the company, in 1924.
were also printed by Turnbull & Stockdale Ltd. on commission for Lamont in 1938. 'The Gumnuts' was a fabric printed in 1929 by Turnbull & Stockdale Ltd., based on a popular Australian series of books featuring very small, chubby fairies living in a Eucalyptus tree. The popularity of fairy designs in the 1920s, particularly in illustration of children's books, is discussed by Colin White.\(^{427}\) Popular media characters that did not require licensing fees were ideal, such as the baby panda at the London zoo, drawn from life by Eric Gilboy at Sandersons in 1934.\(^{428}\)

Cheaper studio produced nursery designs were also produced for dress fabrics. The CPA had a 'Kydsjoy' range produced by the B. Schwabe & Co. Ltd. branch.\(^{429}\) Examples of CPA dress fabric designs in the Archive of Art and Design pattern books are: a printed cotton of blue witch on broomstick and various toys from 1934/5; sheep with small flowers design and a train and Christmas tree design from 1937/8; small yellow buildings and blue birds design and one of seaside motifs with dolls in 1938/9. All these designs have very small motifs, crudely drawn. Ferguson Bros. Ltd. had some similar designs in the trial book for 1939: two designs produced by the studio, for rayon fabrics, one of a tortoise with a top hat and walking stick and a hare in a green jacket and another of a wooden doll and other toys in yellow, with red, blue and black details. Designs of farm animals seem to have been very popular, both in the cheaper fabrics (Figures 6.309-311) and in cotton (Figure 6.308). The more expensive printed cotton designs at Ferguson Bros. included some rather surreal bird-man puppets (Figure 6.306), bird toys and Dutch figures. There were some clearly nursery designs in the CPA Engraving Book, such as a rabbit design in February 1936, a teddy bear design and one with a small lady in a pink dress with parasol in March 1936 and a design that could be cavemen and dinosaurs in February 1937 (Figure 6.307), while others could be nursery or pictorial (folk costume figures, small house designs, balloons and the sailing ship: Figure 6.45). All could be described as Modernist. Mabel Lucie Attwell produced nursery designs of small children in a very personal style from c.1910 to the 1940s, depicted with large, rounded heads. Ferguson Bros. Ltd. produced a range of these designs, usually in Ferlotta fabric. A similar style (no designer is stated) was used for the fairy design printed for Foxton in 1922 (Figure 6.313).

\(^{428}\) Oral history interview by Sanderson archivists, 11/4/91.
\(^{429}\) Illustrations in *The Drapers' Record*, 24/1/31, p32.
The proportion of Turnbull & Stockdale Ltd. furnishing textiles designed for children increased in the 1930s (none in 1930, 1 in 1933, 3 in 1936, 6 in 1939). Five of these were by Passaner, two by other freelance designers, one by the Libert studio, two ordered by Wm. O'Hanlon and a Modernist design commissioned by Heals (Figure 6.317). The designs were mainly rural scenic designs, some with children (Figure 6.316): others included dancers, a Noah's Ark, a nursery rhyme alphabet and one of sailing ships and islands in 1939. Edinburgh Weavers produced several designs for children, such as the lively 'Sailors Return' by Hans Tisdall (Figure 6.315). The Stead McAlpin prints include some nursery designs by Foxton (e.g. a Modernist French poodle, tiger, bull and goose design: Figure 6.312) and a few by Warners that may be nursery designs, but are presented in an adult way, without humour or simplified forms (Figure 6.314).

430 These were: a design of small houses and trees, by K.S. Ormerod in 1933. Two designs by Passaner in 1936: of children, deer and trees in an E.H. Shepherd/A.A. Milne style and of children playing surrounded by flower borders (roller and block); and a screen design ordered by Heals of a Modernist, comic hunting scene. In 1939: a Passaner roller print of Noah's Ark, screen prints of a farmer (with gun and dog) and farmer's wife; ballet dancers by E.M. Taylor, a block print rural scene with well and windmill by Libert; galleon and desert island by Passaner and a check pattern of small motifs (windmill, stork, Dutch woman, fish, swan, tulips, snowdrops), both ordered by Wm. O'Hanlon & Co. Ltd. Turnbull & Stockdale Ltd. photo books, Bury Museum.
6.7.5 Conclusion: Style Trend Analysis

Clear trends in the popularity of particular motifs are evident, but the semiotic interpretation is not always clear, since volumes of oral history and other evidence would be necessary to substantiate interpretations. There is often a range of Modernist and traditional interpretations of a popular motif, indicating that the stylistic coding was significant in modifying the meaning of the signifier, with some floral motifs floating between possible meanings. The syntagm of a style type, rather than individual signifiers, is often the determining factor. If the source of a popular fashion is a character in film animation, book illustration or newspaper cartoons, the sign is reproduced unmodified, as closely as possible to the form and nature of the original. A sudden fashion caused by a particular event, such as the Tutankamun discovery, appears to result in a relatively cautious degree of interpretation. However, well established styles that became more popular – such as Chinoiserie or Jacobean designs – were treated with creative latitude, allowing a wide range of personal and company approaches. Design trends can be loosely related to social context, but any interpretation of fashion as an indication of a mood of designers and public is highly conjectural. Foreign pictorial designs depicting an exotic Orient, whether Persian, Turkish, Indian or Chinese, were widespread in more expensive furnishing prints of the 1920s, but a more insular, traditional emphasis appears in the 1930s, with floral designs of established British or generic form becoming standard. This could be linked to a less confident relationship with British colonies in the 1930s (though designs representing African motifs are notable for their absence in British fabric designs but an established genre of Modernist toile designs in French fabrics of the period). However, the most probable reasons for insularity in the 1930s are the perception of harsh economic and social conditions and the prospects of war. Pictorial and nursery designs in the 1930s emphasised domestic and rural scenes, including farms and farm animals and small house and tree designs. The fashion for nautical motifs in 1938-9 (though seaside holidays and cruises were very popular) seems to indicate an awareness of Britain’s geographical status as an island and the significance of the navy.
6.8 Conclusion: Design Chapter

A clear difference in taste structure does seem to have operated between furnishing and dress fabric designs. Different styles operated in the dress and furnishing division: Modernist abstract and figurative design was more popular in furnishing prints in the early 1920s and in 1932-4, but existed throughout the period for dress fabrics. The lack of sufficient dateable design data for printed dress fabrics in the 1920s reduces the possible comparison of trends between the sectors. Furnishing print design seems to have been considerably more conservative than dress print: this conservatism accounts for the dismissive comments by Basil Ionides on the dominance of revival styles in the later 1920s for much of the home market.431

The pattern of style development shown contradicts the established historiographical understanding of Modernist design in Britain. The widely held perception (see Section 1.1.5) that Modernism ‘arrived’ in British design from Germany in the 1930s, and that British acceptance of Modernism was reluctant, is undermined by the vitality of British Modernist textile design in 1919-23, in variety of style, innovative simplification of form and vivid colouring. Modernism in art, which reached a popular acceptance as the dominant form of avant-garde art in c1912,432 became available as mass-production printed textiles after the First World War. The trend in 1920s furnishing prints for Modernist interpretations of established style types could be considered a regressive compromise of formal design style and conservative content (as Paul Greenhalgh characterised British Modernist design433). However, there were also many innovative Modernist furnishing designs with no influence from historic styles and very little dress print design for the home market could be said to relate to traditional styles.

432 Tillyard, S.K. The Impact of Modernism: the Visual Arts in Edwardian England, Routledge, 1988. She discusses the change in taste following the First Post-Impressionist Exhibition in 1910, with a general adoption of Roger Fry's Post-Impressionist terminology and aims by Arts and Crafts Movement amateurs and critics.
Contemporary opinion of British printed textile design seems to be divided between textile industry 'insiders' and severely Modernist critics, artists and others. The consciously Modernist group asserted the priority of architecture (and other forms of three-dimensional design), declared an inviolable quality differential between Modernist and modernistic design and maintained a Modernist unease with decoration undefined by 'fitness to function' criteria. These commentators tended to assume that Modernist printed textile design was introduced in 1930 from a more advanced design movement existing in Continental Europe. The reality of a significant difference between Modernist and modernistic design within printed textiles seems questionable. Evidence from the case study analysis provides examples of printed furnishing textile design that could be described as modernistic, Cubist, Futurist, Art Deco or as Modernist (Figures 6.133-5, 138, 140, 201-2), necessitating an acknowledgement of the subjective nature of the dividing line in such definitions. For example, style variations, or fashions, occur within abstract pattern design – zig-zags and triangles in bold colours during the late 1920s, influenced by the Art Deco exhibition, or squares in yellow and red-brown colours in the early 1930s – but both styles may be based on a Modernist approach of developing a design using the expressive qualities of space, line, shape and colour. The aggressive reaction of Modernists against studio design (castigated as modernistic or Jazz) shows both the scale of the introduction of a more Modernist style in pattern design, and their defensive need to mark a difference between the mass of such designs and theirs, thus retaining some cultural capital as the 'avant-garde'. This underlining of the distinction between terms was a social response, rather than the absolute qualitative and stylistic difference implied. The textile industry design activists, such as Captain Turnbull, James Morton, Minnie McLeish, a few commentators such as Todd and Mortimer or Aldous Huxley and The Studio journal, were aware of the development of Modernist pattern design throughout the interwar period. A model of avant-garde Modernist pattern design was established by the DIA in 1914-9, based particularly on the block prints of the Wiener Werkstatte and British export prints for West Africa.

Market difference could be a dominant factor in design style, particularly for export markets. A similar style template for specialised dress fabric export markets was used by manufacturers, printers and agents. This shows strongly for African and Indian markets, but clear styles and motifs are also evident in export to America, China and Japan. However, there was increasing innovation within these styles over the period, as it became impossible to compete principally on price. In the home market, abstract design was most common in the cheaper dress fabrics, while conventional and bold Modernist design was produced for the mid-range price bracket. In furnishing prints, the most expensive block print designs were usually very conventional, with a wide variation in style for mid-range machine prints. Although historical styles were not usually used for dress fabrics, there were equally strong conventions in the export styles.

It is clear that there was a link in between the need for economic stringency and design policy in the furnishing textile side of the industry during the 1930s depression. A serious change in design policy due to economic factors was the decision by several high quality furnishing fabric manufacturers and printers to adopt Modernist, particularly abstract, design in the depression as a low cost alternative (due to the reduction in blocks and rollers needed), evident in the policy changes at Warner & Sons and MSF Ltd. In general, new economic conditions requiring an expansion in sales, such as the post-war situation and the depression, were conducive to a more innovative approach in design. However, there is no close correlation between economic change and design style. The switch from block and roller to screen prints to minimise expenditure on small volume production (Section 5.4.4.3.3) also had some effect on design style. The rough, Expressionist emphasis of the Modernist block print style in furnishing prints was replaced by precise shapes in much Modernist design of the 1930s (though loose, painterly style designs were produced in machine, surface and screen prints throughout the period). Any characterisation of screen print as the medium used for experimental design is undermined by the volume of conventional designs also produced using the process and the frequency with which machine printing was used for avant-garde designs. Fabric and finish differences appear to have been a stronger determinant of design style than print process.

Such Modernist commentators include Nikolaus Pevsner, Anthony Bertram, J.M. Richards, Noel Carrington, Paul Nash, Dorothy Todd, Raymond Mortimer and Alastair Morton, who joined MSF in 1931.
Analysis of the sources of influence and design innovation indicated the significance of company design studios, rather than freelance artists or architects. The Balfour Committee statements assuming a clear difference in style and a stronger French influence in dress fabrics hold up under empirical analysis. However, the assumption that the most innovative design, leading fashion developments, originated in Paris is not sustained. High quality design in furnishing prints was produced by British, French and German freelance designers, but the most avant-garde designs seem to have been produced by a few German and British freelancers and from the company studio designers. Dress fabric prints seem to have been designed to a greater extent by studio designers than furnishing printed textiles. Studio design can be seen as intentional direction in design strategy. The company studio was used to create a distinctive company design approach and to initiate style (or fashion) change, supported by such relevant freelance designs as were available. MSF and Sandersons show a clear emphasis in studio direction, while Ferguson Bros., Edinburgh Weavers and Warners developed a proactive sales policy of using innovative design to lead consumer fashion. The UTR seems to have used design as a competitive weapon, but followed market indicators rather than being strongly innovative. This indicates that contemporary styles were to a significant extent a product of the design approaches of individual companies and the intentional direction of industry directors and design managers. However, there were patterns of consumer taste that determined much of the design production of printed textiles, both in export markets and the home trade.

The activity of Government and cultural organisations in promoting Modernism (Chapter 2) appears to have been only partially successful. The campaign raised the public profile of Modernist design in 1930-4, encouraging the popularity of abstract furnishing textile prints at this time. However, no permanent change in taste occurred, since fashion swung back to conventional floral patterns in 1935-40. The difference in dress and furnishing print style also implies that the simplistic conception of Modernism as 'good design' (to be accepted or rejected by individual consumers, dependant on their conservative or enlightened understanding of design), is not tenable. Mass movements in popularity of very different design styles occurred simultaneously in the different sectors, indicating that consumers bought very different design styles according to the context and social categorisation of the artefact. The persistence of some ideas, such as the Parisian basis for fashion, also casts doubt on the effectiveness of Modernist propaganda. The frequency of reference to Parisian design in dress fabric advertisement indicates that Paris was considered a reliable
signifier of taste and fashion by retailers and consumers, although German rather than French design was seen as authentically Modernist by design commentators and Wiener Werkstatte and British block print design was constructed by The Studio journal as the Modernist style in textile prints. Retailers had a key role in constructing fashion change, whether as commissioners of print production (such as Liberty or Heals) or in the more passive position of making a choice from the manufacturers productions or wholesaler ranges. The display of goods, particularly by some department stores (who employed interior design advisors and staged exhibitions of innovative design and art, thus asserting a position of cultural authority within the process of consumption) presented a frequently changing demonstration of current constructions of textile fashion.
7. Conclusion to the Thesis

7.1 Introduction

The aim of this thesis was to analyse the process of style development and the factors defining and effecting the formation of taste in the interwar British printed textiles industry. A systematic analysis of the style trends discernible in the surviving design records of a range of case-study companies was undertaken. The formation of style trends was considered in relation to the strategic policy of these companies; broad structural and economic conditions in the industry; and the ideological construction of pattern design by Government, independent industrial and cultural organisations and the media. This approach required a substantial basis of empirical evidence from companies, organisations and Government, with analysis of each structural factor or possible causal agent examined across all case studies and other sources. The resulting interpretation of style formation, design innovation and policy in the industry was compared to historiographic constructions of Modernism in Britain during the interwar period and on the structural basis of decline in the textile industry. The scale of this investigation allows a theory of the key factors in style formation in the interwar British printed textiles industry to be posited. In addition, substantial conclusions can be drawn on a range of relevant issues: on the popularity of Modernist pattern design; the role of Government and other cultural organisations in promoting Modernist design; the relationship of style developments to source of designs, production method and fabric type; structural change in the consumption structure of textiles in the period; and innovation in the business approach of the printed textiles industry of the interwar period. This chapter is structured as a summary of the structural, economic and design issues relevant to the process of the style formation and activation of fashion change within the printed calico industry, with a final assessment of the most significant factors in the construction of taste.
7.2 Structural Analysis

7.2.1 Structural Divisions in the Industry

Analysis of the structure of design production revealed a separation in the source of supply for dress and furnishing print designs (Chapter 3), indicating independent systems for the construction of taste in these fields of production. Furnishing print design was mainly supplied by individual freelance British designers, based in or around London, supported by a small company studio and supplemented by German and French freelance designers. Dress print design was primarily sourced from company studio designers and a small group of Parisian and Manchester commercial design studios. Export dress fabric design was even more restricted in its sources, with a few specialised studio designers and Manchester designers supplying the market, except for instances where a design was sent from the agent of merchants active in a particular market. A structural division between the dress and furnishing print sectors was also evident in the export markets covered and the economic significance of particular markets in each sector. In broad terms, the differences in market emphasis asserted by the Balfour Report were substantiated by case study analysis. Dress print production in the interwar period was predominantly for the export markets of India, the Middle East, East Indies and West Africa, with a smaller home market section. These markets were supplied with designs corresponding to well established styles, used as templates of popular taste in the market. Furnishing prints were mainly sold in the home market, Dominions, Europe, North and South America (Section 6.4.4). There were preferences for particular furnishing design styles in different markets (such as the magnolia tree designs for the USA) but without distinct taste systems in design. The commissioning and distribution systems were also separate, with merchants commissioning export and much home market dress prints, while manufacturers ordered furnishing prints (Chapter 2). Printed furnishing and dress fabric designs reflect this division (Section 6.3), with different styles, whether Modernist or conventional, produced for the different sectors (although occasional similarities between the sector styles can be seen). Textile print and manufacturing companies often produced for both sectors, although specialisation in export market print processes occurred. The sector division between dress and furnishing fabrics was, however, less significant in terms of the economic condition of the company than the market specialisation, with protected markets such as West Africa and the home market increasing in demand during the 1930s (Chapter
4). The fabric type used was also a determinant of economic success, with companies using artificial silk (rayon) and rayon/cotton mix fabrics finding a readier market due to lower prices.

A further structural difference is evident in textile print companies, between entrepreneurial companies that produced their own designs and marketed their products, and commission-printers, which were dependent on orders from merchants and manufacturers, although some commission-processing by entrepreneurial companies was common (Chapter 2). Commission-processors therefore took a passive role in the formation of style and public taste, while the entrepreneurial companies could develop new styles, respond quickly to market changes and influence public taste in favour of their merchandise. This division shows strongly in the economic analysis, with the commission-processing sector suffering far more severely from price-cutting and loss of business overseas, as the export market shrank and costs of production rose (Chapter 4). An additional distinction is between vertically combined manufacturer-printers and those specialising in printing (though some commission bleaching and dyeing would often be undertaken). Vertically combined companies had competitive advantages in the ability to produce brand name fabrics, using mixtures of yarns and special finishes, allowing a broader range of entrepreneurial strategies. Innovation in fabric and design could be combined in a coherent company approach, allowing the company to claim the cultural value of leading fashion and to position the product advantageously in terms of price and fabric finish.

1 Committee on Industry and Trade, Survey of Textile Industries, HMSO, 1928-9, p352.
7.2.2 Structural Change in Consumption, Retail and Distribution

A key change in consumption patterns was a switch in the basis of market demand from durability to fashion for mass-market fabrics (Section 2.6). It resulted in a pattern of small print orders for a broad range of designs, to provide the wide choice and faster turnover required, with smaller stocks kept by all parties within the distribution chain. This consumption structure was highly costly for print companies, but prioritised the competitive significance of design. Other changes in the home market consumption structure were the increase in level of disposable income through the market and the widespread acceptance of credit, expanding the market available.

The impact of this change in market demand on the distribution system was a greater fluidity, with companies expanding into other sections of the vertical structure. This included production companies taking on direct distribution without wholesalers, retailers giving commissions directly to manufacturers and merchants and wholesalers moving into manufacturing or working in close co-operation with manufacturers to establish brands. These consumption changes resulted in a concentration of drapery outlets in department stores, combined with an emphasis on presenting the store as a leading focus of advanced design and fashion. Co-operative society and chain stores expanded their presence within the general retail market, resulting in greater influence by the CWS in working class furnishing and dress fabric consumption and a national influence on upper working class/lower middle class taste in dress fabric by the chain stores.
7.3 Economic Analysis

7.3.1 Impact of Economic Conditions on Design

The decline in dress fabric exports, due to low priced foreign competition, resulted in a concentration on the home market (these designs were common to some Dominion, American and European markets), and to a smaller extent on the West African market (Chapter 4). This change in emphasis reduced the total volume of designs annually produced, particularly by the CPA, but highlighted the importance of design as a key competitive factor. The switch in home market demand from durability of fabric to fashionability was complemented by a greater emphasis on fashion in furnishing and export dress fabrics. These market changes necessitated a significant investment in design and engraving by print and manufacturing companies (rather than waiting for commissions), with a transition to a more entrepreneurial industrial structure.2

There was no close correlation of style change to macroeconomic change: there were no sudden changes in the bulk of furnishing print designs during the economic crashes of 1921 or 1929-30. There is no chronological sequence of printed dress designs of the same fabric type, of statistical value, during the 1920s from the case study companies, preventing analysis of design change during the periods of sharpest economic change in Britain during the interwar period. However, Pevsner's view that slump conditions were favourable to artistic quality in design3 can be supported to some extent. More static, prosperous economic conditions appear to relate to periods of conservatism in much of the mass and quality market in printed furnishing textile design, while a disruption in economic conditions and patterns of demand (postwar conditions and the depression) stimulates innovation. The change in demand during the depression (with an increase in demand for cheaper fabrics, partly due to the protection introduced in 1932, diminishing of the market for high quality textiles and greater competition for this home market due to the reduction of exports) had a more gradual effect on design. A range of strategies were adopted to reduce the price of the product. The high differential between block and roller print costs resulted in a reduction in use, or closure, of block print workshops during the depression. Reduction in the number of blocks or rollers used for a design, to minimise costs, was another common strategy. The reduction in colours and complexity of design

2 Complaint and comment on this change by the FCP and Geoffrey Turnbull is noted in Section 2.4.
resulting had a direct effect on the trend for Modernism in furnishing textiles in 1930-3. Some high quality furnishing print companies made a policy choice to produce a greater proportion of Modernist design, since the greater simplicity of the style required fewer rollers.

Specific cost rises also had a significant impact on design. A key example is the rising wages of engravers, which led to instructions to minimise engraving of new designs and restrictions in the choice and development of design. This had a particularly acute effect in 1925 and 1936, as the impact of new increases in costs was felt. The block print process was also costly due to the high wages of skilled printers and lower production rate compared to roller prints. Rises in dye costs resulted in a reduction of the quantity of colour used in designs (greater use of white grounds, particularly in 1935-6) and changing the techniques used (less indigo printing).

7.3.2 Strategic Intervention and Response to Economic Conditions

The view of Lazonick, Garside and others that entrepreneurial weakness was a cause of decline in the British textile industry⁴ is contradicted for the printed textiles sector of the industry, in the interwar period by the case study evidence. The case studies in particular, and the printed textile industry in general, demonstrated a highly entrepreneurial approach during the interwar period. Strategies employed included diversification and improvement of products, supported by investment in research for innovative fabrics, dyes and finishes; investment in design and speculative engraving; in improved production and power machinery and in advertising. There was also a readiness to make structural changes in distribution practices, industrial organisation or marketing. During the depression, the emphasis was on price rather than cost reduction: cheaper production techniques were introduced, rather than significant national reductions in wages, though moderate, temporary salary and wage cuts were introduced by individual firms. The industry co-ordinated its response to the economic ‘distress conditions’ via a range of common

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institutional bodies, to arrange trade delegations to foreign markets, lobby the
Government, establish price agreements (with incentives for larger print run
orders) and export schemes for particular markets or of specific products. Rationalisation of
production facility was agreed to some extent by the finishing Federations and a national
rationalisation scheme negotiated, based on a legally enforceable quota and pool system.

The Government response to these conditions in the industry can be seen in the
establishment of a series of 'Enquiries' on the cotton industry; in direct intervention in
economic conditions using tariffs, regulation and subsidy; in changes to the education of
designers and in support for design exhibitions. The 1929-30 Cotton Industry Enquiry of
the Economic Advisory Council Committee recommended vertical integration of the
cotton industry and standardisation of product lines - a similar analysis to Lazonick’s view
that the economic decline of the textile industry was due to failure to create large vertically
combined corporations.\(^5\) The Government intervention in the dye industry significantly
increased the costs of the printed textiles industry, though use of higher quality, fast to
light, vat dyes became common. Imposition of tariffs on home and colonial markets by
Government in 1931-4 was highly effective in protecting these markets from the
competitive threat of severely underpriced imported textiles. However, the national
rationalisation and quota scheme proposed by the textile industry was rejected by the
Board of Trade in 1937, as a restriction of fair trade and structural encouragement to
inefficiency. From 1930, improvement in the design quality of British products was
considered a primary requirement for improved international exports. There were a series
of Committees convened to analyse the issue, propose improvements in design training
and designer employment conditions and support a programme of ‘exhibitions and other
forms of educative propaganda\(^6\) to improve industrial and consumer taste. There was a
strong Modernist emphasis in education policy throughout the interwar period, shown by
reports, guidelines and exhibitions of primary and secondary level school work, the
support of short teacher-training courses to promote the new approach, the choice of
representatives and witnesses in committees of enquiry, and in the close consultation with
Dr Gropius by Board of Education officials as part of a strategy to reform the RCA. This


\(^6\) PRO ED 24/ 608: First Interim Report, Inter-departmental Committee on Industrial Design and Art
Education, 27/1/31.
emphasis in education was supported by a concerted policy of a coalition of cultural organisations and various Government departments to promote examples of innovative Modernist style. This policy was an attempt to influence the formation of taste by defining the cultural status hierarchy of preferred styles of design. The effectiveness of the campaign was partial: it encouraged a fashion for abstract Modernist design in furnishing prints in 1932-4, but did not reconstruct popular taste on a more permanent basis, since there was a sharp reaction in favour of conventional floral designs in 1935-40.

7.4 Source of Innovation in Design

The assumption in the Balfour report that fashion was set in Paris for dress fabric is not supported. Paris appears to have been a bulk provider of dress fabric designs, some of which were innovative, but many in standard and well established design styles. Company studio design appears to have been the most innovative, followed by freelance British design, with French freelance studio design the most conventional. However, there were highly innovative designs produced by each category of design source. In furnishing print design, Modernist design was produced primarily by the company design studio and a small number of German and British freelance designers. The more innovative and Modernist approach taken by studio designers (compared to the majority of freelance designers) in the case studies was due to the commercial pressure to maintain a novel, fashionable edge. The need to cut costs (particularly the number of rollers or blocks used) also led to a greater simplicity in design and a proactive approach to finding non-traditional design solutions. Suggestions that artists or architects were the primary source of creative, new textile design were disproven: although artists working as freelance designers were a significant grouping (c.12% of freelance British printed textile designers), their role was fairly limited within industrial printed textile production, while architects were a negligible source of textile design. The artists mainly provided designs for screen print to a small number of companies during the 1930s: the designs printed were of a high standard, but not consistently of a more avant-garde style than professional studio or freelance textile designers. Innovation was not tied to screen print design or to the intervention of artists: for example, the 1919-23 period in printed textiles and export dress

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designs for the West African market were highly innovative and Modernist in design approach, but sourced from company studios and established freelance designers, while the Modernist printed cotton designs in 1926-31 of Ferguson Bros. appear to be mainly studio produced.

7.5 Modernism

7.5.1 Modernism in British Printed Textile Design

The patterns of style development in printed textiles evident from this analysis overturns the historiographic assumptions of Paul Greenhalgh, Fiona MacCarthy and others⁹ that Britain produced very little 'good modern design', that it was a late development during the 1930s, influenced by Continental innovators, and that it was produced and consumed by a narrow group of enlightened individuals. The printed textiles industry appears to have been central in the formation of the ideological basis and design approach of British Modernism in the debates and exhibitions of 1914 (with the establishment of the DIA) and 1918-9. Modernism in printed textiles was based on the Modernist art approach established following the Post-Impressionist exhibitions of 1910 and 1912 and the concepts of significant form. This art-based Modernism has been obscured by the dominant form of Modernist design discourse, centred on three-dimensional design, which considered pattern and decoration suspect and irrelevant to considerations of function, structure, new technical processes and materials. Wiener Werkstatte patterns were taken as a model of textile design in 1914-5, but in the 1919 DIA Manchester exhibition, a broad range of British-designed dress, furnishing and West African export prints demonstrated the DIA ideal of innovative Modernist design. A period of intense experimentation and vivid colour occurred in dress and furnishing prints during 1918-23. This pattern of Modernist innovation in the early 1920s demonstrates that – at least in printed textile design – Britain was not simply reacting to a design movement established on the Continent.

Dress fabric is ignored in contemporary and historiographical discussion of Modernist design. However, the predominant design style in dress fabric prints during the interwar period was Modernist, many showing a distinctive originality comparable to the finest Modernist art and design. The Ferguson Bros. sample books demonstrate that the proportion of abstract designs was far higher in the 1920s than 1930s, decreasing from the 1923 sample book through to the trial book designs of 1937-49. In furnishing prints, there was a movement to more traditional designs from c1923, but innovative design continued, often using historical styles as a base for Modernist interpretation. During 1932-4, there was a fashion for abstract Modernist designs, many showing a continued influence from the 1925 Art Deco exhibition. From 1935 onwards there was a sudden reversion to conventional floral designs in furnishing prints, with more pictorial (adult and nursery) styles, though some Modernist designs continued to be produced throughout the late 1930s. Differentiation between Modernist, modernistic, cubistic and Art Deco design in printed furnishing textiles appears to be less a difference in design approach or a qualitative chasm, as implied in contemporary historiography, and more a matter of prejudice (e.g. by artists, against industrial studio design) or categorisation of style variations within abstract and formalised representational design.

7.5.2 Market Popularity of Modernist Design

The dominance of Modernism in printed dress fabric design demonstrates its general popularity. It is also clear that Modernist design was considered a popular style in furnishing textiles, since most Modernist designs were machine prints rather than block, screen or surface roller. The greatest volume print runs of furnishing prints recorded at Turnbull & Stockdale Ltd. in the interwar period were in Modernist styles, during c1932-4. Analysis of the taste and style preference of social classes can be broadly indicated. Cheaper dress fabric designs – i.e. those with lower engraving costs (Ferguson Bros. Ltd.) or a lower printing price (Turnbull & Stockdale Ltd.) - appear to have mainly been simple abstract or representational Modernist designs. The brighter and more Modernist designs were common in the mid-range dress fabrics, supplemented with a small range of conventional floral designs (this was mainly in the softer artificial fabrics and voiles, used for underwear, nightwear and children’s clothes). The more expensive designs were often more realistic representations of flowers and fruit, either in a scribbled style or a more subtle watercolour effect. The high quality market in furnishing prints appears to have
been very conservative, though Modernist block or screen prints were available. There is insufficient price data to differentiate the market of much of the furnishing print designs produced by Stead McAlpin Ltd. These results undermine the association of Modernism with an elite consumer group by Nicolaus Pevsner, Maurice Rena and others, but do support the broad class differentiation asserted by Mark Turner and Leslie Hoskins, of a more traditional style retained by the upper social classes.\footnote{Pevsner, N. op. cit., p207; Rena, M. ‘How Textiles are Made’, The Studio, Feb. 1937, p101; Nash, P. Room and Book, The Soncino Press Ltd, 1932.}

7.6 Construction of Taste

The leading factor in the construction of taste appears to have been the design approach of individual companies, since the differences in style between companies were more strongly defined than for market (apart from specific export dress styles), print process or source of design. The public perception of fabrics by categorisation of use was, however, sufficiently strong for very different design styles to be popular in dress and furnishing textiles, even when the type and weight of the fabric was similar. This difference in style between dress and furnishing fabrics was institutionalised by separation of design source: the designers of each fabric type would be familiar with particular conventions and styles and would act as independent fields of production for the formation of taste (though affected by common economic and cultural factors). Retailers (Liberty, Heals, Marks and Spencer) also show a clearly defined endogenous approach to style and may have had a strong influence in defining the construction of fashionable textile design for the consumer groups associated with their stores. External media sources, such as exhibitions, journals, films or children’s books, could be the source for a particular fashion or have a role in defining the perception of what was avant-garde in design. The Modernist propaganda campaign by Government and design critics will have had some influence, but the market need for a movement of fashion change negated assumptions that such exhibitions would make an ideological conversion in public taste on a permanent basis.\footnote{Turner, M. and Hoskins, L. Silver Studio of Design: a Design and Source Book for Home Decoration, Magma Books, 1995 (1st ed. 1988), p126.}
7.7 Further Work

There are certain areas of research, outside the scope of this enquiry, which could be pursued further to investigate the implications of the conclusions reached in this thesis. Analysis of French and German design studio archives would clarify the degree of difference in approach and style between design sources indicated by the case studies. Analysis of such retail archives of the period as are extant would define market tastes more closely and would further develop the basis of evidence for analysing the popularity of Modernism. Use of art school records could deepen knowledge of the educational influences of individual designers and thus of the structure of influence within the field of printed textile design in the period. More broadly, issues examined in this thesis - the popularity of Modernist pattern design, the design difference due to source, the effect of economic context on design change, the relation between business and design innovation and the role of Government and industry organisations in defining ideological assumptions and policy objectives - could be applied to other industries, countries and periods.
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